

LETTER  
OF  
AN ADOPTED CATHOLIC,

ADDRESSED TO THE  
PRESIDENT OF THE KENTUCKY DEMOCRATIC ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON CITY,

ON

*Temporal allegiance to the Pope, and the relations of the  
Catholic Church and Catholics, both native and  
adopted, to the system of domestic slavery  
and its agitation in the United States.*

The speech of Hon. W. R. SMITH, of Alabama, delivered in the House of Representatives  
January 13, 1855, "on the American party and its mission," reviewed.

SIR: I desire to address this letter to you, and in advance I will ask your pardon for any trespass I may commit upon your time or patience. The subject of this communication is one of popular consideration, and one about which much has already been said, and will be said again, by a portion of the people of this republic who are pleased to style themselves "*Americans*," but who are better known as Know-Nothings!

The exclusive and exceedingly proscriptive doctrines of this organization have met the withering rebuke and stoutest opposition of the Democratic and a most respectable portion of the old Whig party united, upon the lofty principles of democratic liberty, as set forth in the constitution of the United States, and as illustrated by the lives and principles of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and Andrew Jackson, and also by those other noble patriots and statesmen, Clay and Webster, as well as Cass, Douglas, Buchanan, Breckinridge, and a host of others of all parties, who still survive as instruments in the hands of Providence to save the country from destruction and desolation. In this contest for the civil and religious rights of all the people alike, the great orators and statesmen have had to fight a double though a common enemy—the purely Know-Nothing party, on the one hand, and the Black Republican or Abolition party on the other. This latter division is known by various names, such as "*Freesoilers*," "*Ani-Nebraska men*," &c. &c. But it matters very little by what names they style themselves; they are all, or nearly all, Know-Nothings, and opposed to granting the adopted citizens and the Catholics their ancient privileges and the rights of conscience as guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the United States. It is true Senator Seward is not a Know-Nothing, and it is equally true that Horace Greeley deploras rather than opposes the proscriptive and unconstitutional principles of the organization. But it should be remembered, and ought never to be forgotten, that it is the "*higher law doctrine*" of those men, which sets aside the Constitution of the country, that has introduced all the mischief in politics, and infidelity to the paramount and fundamental laws of the country. But why does the great organ of the Black Republicans deplora Know-Nothingism? Because he says, "thousands of the adopted citizens will be kept off from the *Republican party who might otherwise be relied upon*" against the South in the approaching and momentous struggle for their constitutional rights and the preservation of the Union. This is only a trick of the far-seeing Senator from New York and his organ the *Tribune*, to catch the adopted citizens of the North in their Abolition nets. These men are only exceptions to the vast and entire mass of this party in the North. To show that they are nearly all Know-Nothings, we have only to look at their speeches and votes in the House of Representatives on the "*Washington municipal election bill*," by which the rights of the foreign-born citizen might be secured to him, and his right to vote under the Constitution protected. When the final vote upon that measure was taken, nearly every one of the Black Republicans voted against it; thus proving that they are all Know-Nothings. If any other evidence were wanting, the proceedings and character of the recent Philadelphia Convention were sufficient. In that convention they gave their first preference to N. P. Banks a candidate for President; and were he deemed as available as their necessities required before the people, he would have been the man. This political adventurer is at once an ultra Black Republican and an uncompromising Know-Nothing. Last year, in the House of Representatives, he delivered the most unscrupulous speech against foreigners and Catholics. Lewis D. Campbell, of Ohio, his superior in both these respects, is the great Freesoiler and Black Republican of the West! Mr. Fremont, who received the nomination of the Convention, not long since gave his entire adhesion to the Know-Nothing party; and Mr. Dayton, the candidate for Vice-President, has been president, it is said, of a Know-Nothing council in his own city.

Johnston, who has been put on with Fremont by the bolters, is the veriest Know-Nothing and yet, notwithstanding these facts, which are notorious to the whole country, they resolve in their platform of principles that "they will guarantee liberty of conscience and equality of rights among citizens," and invite the adopted citizens and the Catholics, whom they have proscribed, and abused, and vilified, to co-operate with them! How much further could audacity and hypocrisy go than this? No farther! no farther! Rather than co-operate with such men as Campbell of Ohio, Banks of Massachusetts, and the "Sharpe Rifle" fraternity in Congress, Wilson, and that sort of men, whom I know to be Know-Nothings, I would suffer pillory.

With these remarks, sir, I shall proceed to the examination of the points I propose to discuss. You are aware that I am a foreigner by birth and a Catholic by profession. In my humble person, therefore, are illustrated and embodied all the elements of mischief to this country; all the crushing, withering evils to which American liberty is exposed, and from which it must inevitably suffer. It is confidently alleged that myself and every Catholic not born in the United States are emissaries of the Pope, and therefore enemies to this country; that we owe an allegiance to him higher and above the Constitution; that his claims upon us are paramount, nay, superior to every other earthly consideration; and that no other obligation can relieve us, and no power can absolve us from the arrogant pretensions of the Roman Pontiff. In short, they say, we owe him the highest temporal as well as spiritual obedience. Native born Catholics are, however, excepted from the force of these accusations, upon the plea that they owe no temporal allegiance to the head of the Church. 'Tis true, indeed, they do not; but it is equally true that no Catholic does, except those who are citizens of the Papal States in Italy; and this is due from them only as fealty to the Constitution is due from the citizens of the United States, and allegiance to the Crown is due from the citizens of the British Empire. One allegiance, therefore, is due from every Catholic, and but one; and it matters not where he may have been born, whether in Asia or Africa, in Europe or in America, he owes this spiritual and no other allegiance to the acknowledged head of the Catholic Church. I demur, therefore, to this indictment, and I protest against its specifications. As one of the accused I shall plead not guilty, and I shall assume to speak for all those joined with me in the bill. Sir, I have the fullest confidence, and I experience all the consolations that appertain to that confidence, that I will be able to convince even our accusers that great injustice has been done us, and that instead of our religious faith being calculated to divide or weaken our allegiance to this country, and our loyalty to the Constitution and all the institutions of this Republic, it challenges our obedience, and claims for them all our cordial and enthusiastic support; nor does locality with us, whether it be North or South, or East or West, create any new claim or alienate one old affection. We have no church North and no church South; no Synod and no Conference of ours excommunicates the christian citizen and declares him unworthy of christian communion and christian fellowship because he owns a slave. The Catholics of Massachusetts and of Maine, who own no slaves, extend the hand of fellowship as christians and as citizens to the Catholics of Virginia and the Carolinas, of Kentucky and of Louisiana, who may have their hundreds. Our faith embraces in its charitable scope every person and all the institutions of our common country. Our Priests present no memorial to Congress "in the name of Almighty God," and advocate no treason to the laws and no murder of the citizen on the Lord's day. Our laity everywhere try to be at once good citizens and moderate christians! We are no fanatics; we are no Abolitionists; and we have no sympathy for any men who are arrayed against the laws of Congress and who are laboring to overthrow the Government of the United States. The Catholic who would array himself against the laws or any section of this country, having equal rights under a common Constitution, would be guilty of double treason; treason to his country and treason to his religion. These are my views, and these only become the enfranchised citizen and the Catholic.

With these remarks, sir, I shall proceed to examine some of the grave charges urged against us by the Know-Nothing orators and presses, both at the North and at the South. As Know-Nothingism in the Northern States is now Black Republicanism pretty much, I shall take no notice of it there, and will content myself with the views of "South Americans." That I may not be mistaken, and that I may manifest a decent respect for the assertions and opinions of their great-st orators and oracles, I will quote from the speech of the Hon. Mr. Smith of Alabama, delivered in the United States House of Representatives, January 15, 1855, and entitled "THE AMERICAN PARTY AND ITS MISSION." I have selected this speech because it is the boldest I have seen, and because it is said to be the ablest. It has been preserved from merited oblivion, and is now advertised for sale in large numbers as an admirable document for the carvass for President and Vice President of the United States. Sir, I will here presume to say, that Judge Smith entered upon this speech with a mind deeply prejudiced, and in a condition not calculated to do justice to the subject, or to take that view of things which became an enlightened statesman in the Congress of the United States. After some general and very severe remarks, he is interrogated by the Hon. Mr. Barry, of Mississippi, as follows:

"I desire to ask the gentleman another question. I desire to know whether Gavazzi, who is getting up these Know-nothing organizations, is not a foreigner? I wish to know whether the editor of the Crusader, the great Know-nothing paper of the country, is not a foreigner?"

In answer to these inquiries Mr. Smith replies: "I have no time to talk about Gavazzi and the Crusader; I like Gavazzi for his exposure of the Jesuits!" It may be proper to state in this place, that this Gavazzi had been himself a Jesuit, and had suffered expulsion from that order on account of his crimes against virtue and religion! Mr. Smith claims consideration,

never, for this foreign and wicked priest, and uses him in evidence against all Catholics, whom he erroneously styles "Jesuits" He then proceeds to give what he is pleased to call the oath of the Jesuits. I will not quote the oath entire, I will only give the most obnoxious part, as follows :

"I do denounce and disown king, prince, or State named Protestants, or obedience to any of their inferior magistrates or officers. I do further declare that I will help, assist, and advise all, or any of his holiness' agents, in any place wherever I shall be, and do my utmost to extirpate the heretical Protestant doctrine, and to destroy all their pretended power, legally or otherwise!"

Mr. Smith assumes the truth of this oath, without informing the House or country where it can be found. I will here undertake to say to that gentleman, and to the country, that there is no such oath to be found, derived from any source entitled to credit or respect. The Jesuits never took such an oath. They take no oath at all. But if it be true, that the Jesuits take such an oath, Gavazzi was an exceedingly bad witness to put upon the stand against his own order, and especially against the Catholic portion of the people. As a Jesuit, he must have taken that oath, if it is taken at all; and as a *renegade*, he stood upon the stand an infamous and perjured man! Mr. Smith believes this *perjurer*, as against Catholics—nay, more, he wishes that *all* shall believe him, and gives the weight of his character, and the influence of his name to one that, by all the laws of our country, by the laws of nature, and of all civilized nations, by every law human and divine, is unworthy of respect or belief! For the sake of Mr. Smith, for the sake even of the apostate Gavazzi, for the sake of all, and for the sake of human nature, I deny the truth of this *Jesuit oath*! I pronounce it a wicked forgery, fabricated by a bad man, and for wicked purposes.

The honorable gentleman next proceeds as follows :

"I now approach, Mr. Chairman, the most delicate and important subject that has ever engrossed the attention of the American people. It is my duty to proclaim to my countrymen the dangerous tendency of the Roman Catholic religion. From its first days to the present, it has, *on all occasions, without the slightest exception*, been averse to liberty and to free institutions. It recognizes the *infallibility* of the Pope. Its greatest writers say, *infallibility* in the Pope is synonymous with sovereignty in a monarch. 'The true principle is,' says De Maisier, 'that sovereignty comes from God.' This is the origin and idea of the phrase—'The King can do no wrong.'"

I will not characterize that paragraph as it deserves, but I will undertake to say that I shall show every word of it, every single word, contradicted by history; and I shall not show it so by Catholic authority alone, but by the best Protestant testimony also. I am astonished that a man, even of ordinary intelligence, should be so ignorant of the history of the world, and of his own country. Why, the memory of some, and the experience of most men, will array themselves against part of these assertions, and impartial history will pronounce against them all. Surely no one can be so ignorant of history as not to know that the earliest republics of the Christian era, in the middle ages, rose to glory and renown under the care of the Catholic church, and by the valor of the arms and triumphs of the arts of their Catholic people! Can any one be so ignorant as not to know that the little republic of San Marino has preserved its independence and its republican form of government for fourteen hundred years within the very heart of the Papal States, and almost within the shadow of the Vatican! In England it was Catholic Alfred gave the body of the common law; he gave, also, the judges, the magistrates, the sheriffs, the courts of justice, the elective system, and that great bulwark of human liberty everywhere, the trial by jury. He also conferred upon the people the right to tax themselves; and it was for this principle in the British constitution, that the revolutionary fathers fought, because they said this and this alone was liberty, and this, let me add, is the soul as well as body of American liberty in this country! Did not the Catholic barons and Catholic clergy give the Magna Charta to England and the world as the basis of popular democratic liberty? The solid foundation of popular liberty has been laid in the world more than twelve hundred years, and all done by Catholics. For the truth of this I appeal to history. The first knowledge of a statesman or a legislator ought to be to know the history of his own country, and of other countries, if possible. What a deplorable evidence does this "*intensified American*" congressman present even of the outlines of history, and how much more of its particular parts? Every schoolboy knows that the Catholic clergy and laity, at the commencement of the Revolution, were among the first and most ardent to join their countrymen in defence of their common rights and liberties against the tyranny of a most unnatural Protestant king and Protestant parliament! During that long and painful struggle there was not an Irish tory to be found, nor is there any evidence of a Catholic or a priest being among the long line of *tories*, native and foreign born, that left Boston when Washington entered that city in all his glory! Charles Carroll, of Carrollton, signed the Declaration of Independence, and risked all he had on earth in the contest. He gave a million of dollars, which was more than half the means of the colonies at that time, to carry on the war. His cousin, Rev. John Carroll, a *Jesuit priest*, was associated with Dr. Franklin on a mission to secure the neutrality of the Catholics of Canada, which they did. Was he acting under the Jesuit oath? John Barry, a pious Catholic, and a native of Ireland, was appointed by the first Congress to command the Lexington, the first vessel-of-war owned by this government. He was the father of our navy, and for his valor and his services he received the thanks of

Washington. Unfortunate Ireland, the country of my own birth, and the victim of the same oppressions still, gave *sixteen thousand of her Catholic children* as an offering upon the altar of liberty! (See Report of Parliament in 1793.) Who were the friends of liberty, and the faithful allies of the revolutionary fathers beyond the sea? Catholics! *all Catholics*, and none but Catholics! I do not ascribe the favor or the opposition given by the world in this war of universal liberty, to the religious opinions of the people—not at all! I would neither suspect nor accuse any one on account of his religion—my own best friends are Protestants, and for them I would suffer and do anything! But when I am accused upon this point, for the sake of truth and justice, I shall vindicate the integrity of history! Catholic France furnished thirteen thousand troops. She furnished fifty ships of the line, besides frigates. When we had no money, or a depreciated currency, she advanced in loans seven millions of dollars. Nor was this all; she despatched ships laden with provisions and military stores to our famishing army, including two hundred pieces of artillery, four thousand tents, and clothing for thirty thousand men! Nor yet was this all; she acknowledged our independence, and in 1778 made the first treaty with us, wherein she pledged her friendship and her aid! The siege of Yorktown, the closing, crowning triumph of an eight years' war for freedom, beheld Washington and Lafayette, the native Protestant and the foreign Catholic, side by side glorying in a common victory! We had no aids from the Protestant countries of Europe—the enemy received them all; every government, from Norway and Sweden down, sided with the king; and Hanover alone furnished 1,700 mercenary troops to supply the place of Catholics, whom “Lord Howe could not rely upon” in the struggle for freedom. Every body remembers the famous Hessians! So much for the first charge of Mr. Smith.

The next charge is, that Catholics believe in the *infallibility* of the Pope. And in this belief all bigots, as well as Mr. Smith, consider the fatal tendencies of our faith to lie. But Catholics do not believe in the infallibility of the Pope; it is no part of the Catholic religion; no intelligent man can believe it, and no one can maintain the assertion! I could, if it were necessary and justifiable, here present volumes of evidence against the charge. I will, however, give one authority, and but one, which is entitled to the highest respect, as well for his great learning as for his acknowledged piety—and that is Archbishop Kenrick. In his work on the SUPREMACY OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE, (pages 222, 223,) he says—

“In pronouncing judgment, he does not give expression to a private opinion, or follow his own conjectures; but he takes for his rule the public and general faith and traditions of the Church as gained from the Scriptures, the Fathers, and other documents; imploring the guidance of the Divine Spirit, and using all human means for ascertaining the facts of Revelation.” These judgments, upon *doctrinal points*, are received as the highest human authority on all questions of religious faith! The learned Archbishop says, further:

“The *personal* fallibility of the Pope in his private capacity, writing or speaking, is freely admitted by the most ardent advocates of Papal prerogatives. His official infallibility, in the circumstances just mentioned, is strongly affirmed, although the French clergy, in 1682, contended that his judgment might be amended.”

So much for the infallibility of the Pope, and the dangers to American liberty arising from it! While upon this point, I will quote from the reverend Dr. Nevin, an eminent and enlightened Divine of the Presbyterian Church. He says:

“For ourselves, we say it plainly, we believe the acknowledgment of the Pope’s spiritual primacy is just as little at war with American liberties as the acknowledgment of any like primacy in either of the Presbyterian general assemblies, or in the American Episcopate, or in the private judgment, simply, of any true-blooded Puritan Independent.”

As to the remark that the Church considers *sovereignty* coming from God, I admit it, but not in the subtle and unjust sense of the gentleman. We read in the Scriptures of the “*God of Nations*.” It is believed by the Church, and so Catholics are taught to believe, that all *good, just, and legitimate governments* receive the sanction and approval of Heaven. This is what De Maister means by *sovereignty*! I believe in *this sovereignty*; so does every rational man; and I would be sorry if Mr. Smith did not! Despotisms and tyrannies never found favor with the Church, and I am not aware of any Catholic advocate for such systems! The remark that “*this is the origin of the idea and phrase, ‘THE KING CAN DO NO WRONG,’*” is not just, and is not sustained in the books as of Catholic paternity. That maxim of monarchists and despots originated with a man named FILMER, in the reign of James I, “and it became the badge of *Tories and High Churchmen*! It was gravely maintained that the Supreme Being regarded hereditary monarchy as opposed to all other governments with peculiar favor.” (See Macaulay, vol. 1, page 66.) The same historian says, (page 67 of the same volume:) “In the Middle Ages the doctrine of indefeasible hereditary right would have been regarded heretical; for it was altogether incompatible with the Church of Rome.” A Protestant historian declares, therefore, that it originated with an Englishman, FILMER by name; was the badge of the *Tories and High Churchmen* in England, and that it was not in favor, but was incompatible with the Catholic Church! The “*important subject*,” as contained in the above paragraph, I have shown to be unfounded from beginning to end. The whole speech is made of such material, and could your patience endure it, I could sift it so that nothing would remain!

As to the assertions that Popes have absolved subjects from the allegiance due to their rulers, I shall only say, what every reader of history knows to be true, that the Popes always protected the people, as far as they could, against the tyranny and rapacity of bad kings. In the

early ages, and while yet governments were unsettled, and the rights of sovereigns and subjects not clearly defined, as a mutual protection against each other, they agreed upon the conditions of empire and of obedience, and made the Pope the arbiter, who held the covenant between the parties. The people pledged that, so long as their kings might rule in justice and mercy, so long they would be loyal and true to their allegiance; but, upon a forfeiture of this compact, solemnly made, they would have a right to renounce them; and that, if they continued their system of oppression and robbery, the Pope might excommunicate them!

The Popes did it; and it was right they should. They were compelled to do it. The Popes had no authority of their own; they never claimed any; they executed a judgment mutually agreed upon by the kings and their subjects; they only pronounced the sentence which the parties themselves had fixed, and only within the territory or empire of the contracting parties. The Popes were a sort of judges within the realm, and their jurisdiction extended not beyond! This humane interference on the part of the Pontiffs has been commended by many and eminent Protestant philosophers and divines. Every one knows that every people have a right to renounce unjust and unlawful rulers. The revolutionary fathers and the people of the colonies renounced King George, and took up arms against him, and fought him eight years, and whipped him, and set up a government of their own. No one pretends that this was wrong; on the contrary, the achievement will descend to the end of time as the grandest in the history of the world. It is a principle laid down by all writers on government, that when the compact is broken upon which sovereignty rests, the original rights of the people may be resumed. Men may oppose their unjust rulers upon the great principle of nature, "which makes it base for a man to suffer when he ought to act; which, tending to preserve the original designations of Providence, spurs at the arrogant distinctions of man, and vindicates the independent qualities of his race!" The Popes, I repeat, only pronounced the sentence, and neither Crown nor Royalty could avert it, or buy out the law; it was administered without favor or affection! The Catholic Church, so far as the inculcation of the principles of morality and public order might claim her attention, has been opposed to revolutions and civil war, only when absolutely necessary. It has always given its aid and support to every good government; it fortifies the subject in his allegiance, and requires him to be a good citizen. This cannot be denied. And should the evil day ever come upon this country when the North shall array herself against the South, or the South against the North, this great conservative principle of the Catholic Church will be exerted in arresting civil war, in promoting peace, and in defending the Union and the constitution!

To show how loyal Catholics have always been, we have only to look into English history, and there we will find a full refutation of all that is urged against them on this point. While the British government has practised that system that the Know-nothing party and Abolitionists desire to establish here—that is, to enslave foreign-born citizens and free the slaves—still they have been most true and most loyal to the Crown. Not because they do not hate that cruel government most heartily, but because of the various and controlling circumstances that sustain them in oppression and attach them to the sovereign. An exhibition of loyalty occurred during the disastrous reign of Queen Elizabeth that ought to protect the Catholic forever from suspicion of disloyalty. That cruel and austere princess persecuted her subjects because they were Catholics, yet they were true to her because she was their sovereign, though her legitimacy as queen was doubted—nay, denied—by many. During the long and doubtful struggle between Elizabeth and Philip, the Catholic King of Spain, the fidelity of the English Catholics was suspected in such a contest. "Confiscations took place daily, the prisons were filled, and hundreds were led to execution, yet, nevertheless, they were true to an unworthy queen! They displayed no less patriotism than their more favored countrymen. The peers armed their tenants and dependents in the service of the queen. Some of the gentlemen equipped vessels, and gave the command to Protestants; and many solicited permission to fight in the ranks as privates against the common enemy." (Lingard's England, vol. 8, p. 200; Stowe, p. 746; Harleian, pp. 11, 64.)

"Not one man appeared to favor the Spaniards; the very papists themselves being no less unwilling than the rest to see the country subject to the ordinary cruelties found in strangers. The Viscount Montague, with himself and son and grandson, presented himself before the queen at the head of two hundred horse that he had raised for the defence of her person; they declared their readiness to fight till death in her cause against all enemies, were they kings, or priests, or Pope, or any other potentate whatsoever." (Osborn, pp. 15, 17, 23, 46.)

Such, sir, was Catholic allegiance in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. If Catholics were found true to a cruel government in the times of persecution, the people of this country need not apprehend much from their disloyalty or want of patriotism!

I am, I repeat, a foreigner by birth and a Catholic by an honest conviction. I owe no allegiance to any prince, Pope, or potentate, inconsistent with the fullest allegiance to the constitution of my adopted country; and were the Pope to come as an invader, I would oppose him as I would any other usurper. The laws of nature and of nations, the laws of the church itself, and every principle of my manhood, would urge me to resist him and defend my country and her institutions. There is no law or usage or precept on earth that will question this paramount duty. These, sir, are my views, and these I am sure would be the views of every adopted Catholic in the United States!

With these remarks in reference to temporal supremacy and Catholic allegiance to the Pope, in answer to the charges contained in the speech of Mr. Smith, and repeated by the orators and

presses of the Know-nothing and Abolition parties generally, I shall proceed to show the relations of the Catholic Church and Catholics to the vexed, and at this time alarming, question of slavery. I desire to do this for two reasons: First, To show the country the Christian views taken by the Church of this relation since the dawn of Christianity; and, in the second place, to show all Catholics, whether native or adopted, that, as good and conscientious members of the Church throughout the United States, they cannot give aid or comfort or countenance or support to that class of men who aspire to high places upon the agitation of slavery, and an overthrow of one section of a common country, because they hold a species of property which is lawful, and which has been in the country for nearly three hundred years, and which, moreover, is secured to them by that constitution that secures us all our liberties and our existence as a great and glorious country!

Without entering into detail, I shall simply state that it was held by the ancient fathers of the Church, and it is still the unanimous opinion of Catholic divines, that slavery exists by divine sanction; that man's sins brought it into the world; and that it is perfectly compatible with the purest morality and the highest Christian perfection. In support of these views are cited the various acts of the Almighty himself, as mentioned in the Scriptures, recognising it as a lawful relation, and also the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were slaveholders, and at the same time models of virtue and piety, and will go down to the end of the world as such. Yet, nevertheless, it has been the humane province of the Church to elevate the slave, to ameliorate his condition, and to mitigate the terrible severities of the system as it found it among the Pagans. But while she did this, she admonished the slave of those duties he owed his lawful master, and the master of those Christian charities and mercies that were due to his slave in the eye of Heaven. She bound them together in the bonds of Christian fellowship; and against those who unlawfully interfered or enticed a slave from his owner, or made his right to him unsafe or insecure, she pronounced her severest censures—her unalterable and irrevocable anathemas! She owned slaves in her own name, and yet, while she did, whenever a slave was freed by his master, or otherwise lawfully, the highest dignities of the Church were accessible to him! Thus she has given an example of Christian charity to all, which, were it observed by the Abolition fanatics and all others, treason and murder and sectional hate would not prevail to so alarming an extent as it does; converting a happy and law-abiding people into enemies and shedders of each other's blood!

It was quite natural, nay, it was the duty of the church to soften the character of the system of domestic slavery which she found in the world. Under the laws of Rome, and it had been so at Athens and in Sparta, the master had the right of life and death of his slaves, and often it was wantonly, almost capriciously exercised. QUINTUS FLAMINIUS killed a slave in the midst of a festival, and another was thrown to fishes to be devoured, because he broke a glass of crystals. Thus every day and constantly the slave was exposed to death. At Rome, whenever a master was assassinated, all his slaves were condemned to death. TACITUS says, "that when the prefect PEDANIUS SECUNDUS was assassinated by one of his slaves, four hundred were to die, and were led to punishment." The system in all its severity extended throughout the then known world, and the number of slaves in proportion to the citizens or freemen exceeds conjecture! THUCYDIDES says, "that in the city of Athens alone, there were 40,000 slaves and only 20,000 citizens; in the Peloponnesian war 20,000 passed over the enemy! THESALY had her thousands of *Penestes*, and Sparta had her tens and hundreds of thousands of *Helotes*. Tyre had them in great numbers, and Herodotus says: "That the Scythians had them in still greater numbers. *Cæsar* in his Commentaries speaks of the multitude of slaves in *Gaul*, and says: "The common people are almost on a level with the slaves." Such was the system of slavery then, and such was its extent—coeval with human society, and co-extensive with the habitable globe. Christianity mitigated it, and under the influences of a new era in morals and religion; it has descended to us, and exists only in a limited degree, and in truly a paternal and Christian character! Against the Pagan system, the Saviour himself opened not his mouth, although it was most cruel. He addressed the Christian master and his slave as Christians and as brothers, and enjoined on each his duties and his obligations. The apostles spoke not against it, but exhorted, as their Divine Master had, and advised, nay besought the fugitive slave to return to his service. The Church, following these examples, speaks not in denunciation of the lawful and humane master, nor does she sanction such conduct in any of her children!

This system of denunciation and unlawful interference was left by the Saviour, by his apostles, and by the Church, to such men as Seward, Sumner, Chase, Hale, Banks, Fremont, Theodore Parker, Beecher, and other fanatics of this age and generation; men most of whom are in favor of enslaving and disfranchising the *Irishman*, the *Dutchman*, and all persons born in foreign countries, and freeing the *negro* and enfranchising him. Look at the action of the Abolition Know-nothing party in Maine, in New Hampshire, in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Vermont, and everywhere, where the Black Republican party prevails.

These unprincipled men urge this unnatural and unlawful theory, and at the same time say *African Slavery* is the great evil of the country, that it has the curse of God upon it; and yet they would have *white slavery* established in its place! They say slavery will cause the ruin and destruction of this government! This, however, is but the fanatic's assertion against the truth of history. With *her* system and her countless slaves, *Greece* grew great and flourished more than three thousand years! *Rome*, with her myriads of slaves, pushed her conquests to the

ends of the earth, and for more than two thousand years was mistress of the world; and when the fabric of her glory and her strength gave way, it was not servile heads that plotted her destruction; and when she fell, there was no slave to glory in her overthrow. Scylla, Marius, Catiline, and the madmen of Rome, whose ambition and whose hatred could not be satisfied short of the destruction of the Roman commonwealth, were the fratricides. The question now pushed upon the country, and to be determined, is, whether the temple of our American freedom shall be overthrown by the madmen of this country, and the freest republic that the world has ever beheld shall be sacrificed to the fanaticism of the Abolition party and its leaders? Without proceeding further, I desire to give in this connexion a few authorities in the Church, both from the holy fathers and canons, (which are the laws by which the Church and all its members are governed,) in reference to the system of slavery.

St. Augustine informs us that the "condition of slavery is justly regarded as imposed upon the sinner; sin, not nature, introduced the word."

St. Ambrose says:

"There would be no slavery to-day, had there been no drunkenness."

St. John Chrysostom says:

"Behold brethren born of one mother: sin makes one of them a servant, and, taking away his liberty, lays him under subjection."

Bishop England says:

"Catholic divines are agreed, that the origin of slavery, as of all other infirmities and afflictions, is to be found in sin."

Pope Gelasius I, in his letters against the conduct of the Pelagians, (a sort of abolition and outlaw party of his time,) states "slavery to have been the consequence of sin, and to have been established by human law."

St. Augustine again says:

"That the peace and good order of society, as well as *religious duty*, demand that the wholesome laws of the State regulating the conduct of slaves should be conscientiously observed."

Bishop England says:

"Slavery is regarded by that Church of which the Pope is the presiding officer, not to be incompatible with natural law; to be the result of sin by Divine dispensation; to have been established by human legislation, and, when the dominion of the slave is justly acquired, to be lawful, not only in the sight of human tribunals, but also in the eye of Heaven."

In addition to all this, there is a positive and unchangeable law of the Church which would forbid any conscientious Catholic being an Abolitionist. The third canon of the Council of Rome, held in the year 500, declares—

"If any one, under the pretence of piety, teaches a slave to despise his master, and to withdraw from his service, and not to serve his master with good will and all respect, let him be anathema!"

"The phrase *let him be anathema*," says Bishop England, "is never appended to any decree which does not contain the expression of unchangeable doctrine respecting belief or morality, and indicates that the doctrine has been revealed by God."

And now, sir, to close the authorities of the Church upon the subject of slavery, I desire to show that every Catholic is bound by a canon law to support the *fugitive slave law* of 1850, as well as the principles of the Kansas and Nebraska bill of Judge Douglas, which the Abolitionists and Black Republicans condemn so much. By a canon of Pope Leo III, in the year 800, it is enacted:—

"Whosoever within the bounds of Italy either the runaway slave of the king, or of the Church, or of any other man shall be found by his master, he shall be restored, without any bar or prescription of years."

Here, we see, is a *fugitive slave law* nearly eleven hundred years old, just like our own, and just and honest in all its requirements under our constitution and happy form of government. The Church has given an old precedent, to be sure; but with us Catholics it is as new and binding to-day as though enacted yesterday!

Sumner and all the Abolition and Black Republican fanatics say this law is from the author of all evil; that it is a compact with Hell; that it ought not to be obeyed, and must be repealed, though the Union and the constitution, and everything worth living for should go to destruction. But, sir, in this terrible assault upon the established institutions of the country, and the rights of the Southern States under the constitution, the Catholic portion of the people will be a reliable ally against the mongrel and Vandal invader, with his united cohorts of Abolitionists and Know-nothings. The adopted citizens and the Catholics will gratefully remember and cordially return the favors they have received from the noble men of the South who have defended them and secured their liberties from this same common enemy. They will—I know they will! By every consideration of religion and love of law, they will do it! By the memories of the past and the hopes of the future, they will do it! Need I tell you that from my very soul I hate this party and their principles? What are they? They propose to rob the man who owns a slave of his property, and his equal rights in a territory purchased by common blood

and common treasure; and another part of the people of that which is still dearer, if possible—their character, their manhood, their liberties, their inalienable natural rights, patented by the Almighty, located on the American continent, and secured by the American constitution. And what are their reasons for doing this? They say the slave *ought to be free*, and the *free man ought to be a slave!* We will, they say, enslave the free white man twenty-one years, and teach him freedom; and the African slave we will at once enfranchise. And this they say is liberty—*intense Americanism!* Good God! and is this the liberty of Washington, of Jefferson, of Franklin, and the patriots of the revolution? Are these the principles for which they fought, and labored, and died? Are these the principles of Andrew Jackson, and the men of the second war of independence? No; this was not their Americanism! The Americanism of the Know-nothing Abolition party is English Toryism. Macaulay, the great British historian and statesman, says:

“Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition, that no people ought to be free until they are fit for freedom. The maxim is worthy the fool in the old story, who would not go into the water until he had learned to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait forever.”

Twenty-one years of slavery to the honest and worthy emigrant cannot make him a better or a safer man during that long probationary punishment, nor make him more reliable at the end of the protracted period. Besides, the genius of the institutions of this republic is to lift up and enfranchise, not to depress or enslave, the humblest votary of freedom. Edmund Burke, the great statesman, speaking of the bigotry and know-nothingism of his times, said:

“Crimes are the acts of individuals and not of denominations, and therefore, arbitrarily to class men under a general description, in order to proscribe and punish them in the lump, is indeed a commendous method, and saves a world of proof; but such a method, instead of being law, is an act of unnatural rebellion against the legal dominion of reason and justice, and this vice, in any constitution that entertains it, at one time or other will certainly bring on its ruin.”

Again he says, speaking of these Know-nothing bigots:

“The audaciousness of these conspirators against the national honor, and the extensive wickedness of their attempts, have raised persons of little importance to a degree of evil eminence, and imparted a sort of sinister dignity to proceedings that had their origin in only the meanest and blindest malice.” This is a good description of the Abolition Know-nothing members of this Congress, though given more than seventy years ago!

Victor Hugo, on the same subject, says:

“Go on, gentlemen! Proceed! Disfranchise, if you will, the three millions of voters, four millions, nay, eight millions out of nine! Get rid of all these! Your law by which you effect it is null, void, and dead; because it is not just; because it is not true; because, while it goes furtively to plunder the poor and the weak of his right of suffrage, it encounters the withering glances of a nation’s probity and sense of right, before which your works of darkness shall vanish; because, in the depths of the conscience of every citizen, the humblest as well as the highest, there is a sentiment sublime, sacred, indestructible, incorruptible, eternal—the right. This right is the rock upon which shall be split and go to pieces the iniquities, the hypocrisies, the bad laws and bad governments of this world!”

Such are the opinions of the great and wise of other countries about this *foreign plant*, which the Know-nothings and Abolitionists impose upon the honest people of this country as truly *American*, and native of this soil. It is not natural to a soil dedicated from the first to be the abode of freedom and the refuge of its votaries from all the earth. And now, sir, what shall I say in concluding this long letter, with which I have vexed you? I need scarcely tell you I am a democrat. I am a democrat, and at a time like this I could not be prouder of anything than to know and feel that I am an humble member of a great party against which all the soundness of the day is banded, and which is fighting the battles of liberty over again against this domestic enemy; that liberty which the founders of this republic wrested from a foreign, though by no means a more despotic or arrogant tyrant. In all the contests for freedom on this continent, the friends of liberty have triumphed. God designed America should be the home of freedom, the asylum for the oppressed, and he will vindicate his heritage to mankind. We shall surely triumph. With our glorious standard-bearers in this struggle—Buchanan and Breckinridge—we can stand the combined attack of the allied forces of Abolitionists, Know-nothings, Black Republicanism, or by whatever name they may be called. Of the transcendent ability and great private worth of our candidates I need not speak. The public life of Mr. Buchanan is a part of the history of the country for forty years together. His last great service rendered to his country in defeating the machinations of the British ministry and our ablest diplomats ought to endear him to every true American. Of Mr. Breckinridge, I cannot find words to express his extraordinary merits. In the sphere of intellect, he has no superior for his years; and his equal of any age in any country is difficult, most difficult to be found. With a mind bold, independent, and decisive, an eloquence and a dignity of deportment that would have graced and swayed the Roman Senate in her most glorious days. He is a statesman of the most enlarged and comprehensive policy; the friend of freedom and of the oppressed every where; the young man’s counsellor and the poor man’s friend; a better man cannot be found—a truer man never lived.

AN ADOPTED CATHOLIC.