

Davis, Henry Winter

THE ORIGIN,

PRINCIPLES AND PURPOSES

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THE American Party is the association of American Republicans to vindicate the fundamental principles of the republic sacrificed by worn out parties to personal and factious ambition.

Multitudes of every party for years mourned in silence the domination of a party discipline too powerful to be openly resisted; for a time they veiled in secrecy the revolt they were preparing: but now that victory has repeatedly perched upon their standard, they recognize their right and their duty to lift the veil before their fellow citizens, and openly to proclaim the purposes of their union.

The American Party grew from weakness to power without patronage, without the countenance of great men, without the watchword of great names, purely and silently in the hearts of the multitude where instinctively dwell the pure principles of American Republicanism.

The inspiration of common sense taught them that their Government was become a plaything for ambitious gamblers, their interests bartered away for their offices, and they themselves were tools in the hands of factious ambition to undermine the foundations of the republic. At this inspiration the American people arose simultaneously in different States, in great cities thousands of miles apart, spontaneously at the bidding of a hidden sympathy associating themselves as the American Party, everywhere without concert yet in perfect agreement, inspired by the same spirit, speaking the same words, pursuing the same objects, silent, sedate, confident of the future, patient of present injustice, and biding its time to speak.

It was natural that its growing power should attract sectional factions. At either end of the Union we have seen the fanatics of freedom, and the fanatics of slavery, disorganizers and disunionists both, seek to disguise their obnoxious principles beneath the power and popularity of its name: but it has torn from their shoulders the disguise, and expelled them from its association because unfaithful to the Union.

For taken under its guardianship the fundamental principles of the republic, the right of the American people to have their Government freed from foreign sympathies, from sectional factions, and from sectarian intrusions, its members have been covered with execration.

It has borne the taunts of its libelers as it was becoming it should do, in silent reliance on its own

purity, and confiding in the power of the principles it professed.

It was consoled in the face of obliquy by observing that the vituperation proceeded from overthrown aspirants or tottering ambition; and that day by day the quiet and substantial power of the country associated itself to its ranks.

The representatives of the party at Philadelphia have thrown off the veil with which policy shrouded the day of weakness, and have shaped in words the thoughts and feelings which inspired its members: and day by day that solemn declaration is adding States to its support.

*On matters of policy variable in time and place,* its principle, never before announced, but everywhere acted on, is, respect for diversity of opinions, for local interests, for the settled will of the people, for the accepted compromises and moderate adjustments of the points of party warfare.

It affirms *as universally binding* those few fundamental principles which lie at the foundation of the republic, which have been perverted, sacrificed, or forgotten in the heat or selfishness of party warfare, and which it is their mission to restore to healthful vigor—the absolute submission to all the requirements of the constitution as a law than which there is none higher—the banishment of sectional factions from federal politics—the exclusion of sectarian religion from political influence—the protection of the absolute freedom of thought by vindicating the integrity of the public schools from all sectarian influence, whether Protestant or Papist—and the guarding of

the purity of elections, against the influence of venal foreign emigrants.

Men who long had looked on the old parties as the only possible expression of the wants and wishes of the people, wondered at this mysterious apparition which pushed them from their seats with invisible and unostentatious but irresistible might: and they marvelled the more, that it trode so swiftly on the heels of that host, which, as the faithful fondly hoped, had inaugurated in General Pierce the final triumph of the militant democracy.

Wise men saw even in the moment of triumph in this glory the glow merely which wraps decay in light. The least instructed eye can now trace the secret causes of this mysterious opposition, equally sudden and universal, in the severance of popular interests from party associations, that flight of the spirit from the body which is death, and in the audacious attempt of personal ambition disguised in the garb of public interest to govern the country in the name of the dead.

The country has reached, for the third time in its brief history, a period of party dissolution. Measures around which parties rallied have ceased to be controlling, new measures attract primary attention, and the old parties have fallen to pieces in the hands of party leaders in the vain effort to maintain unity of thought and action on those novel topics.

I. It has been quite apparent in the last four or five Congresses, *that party names have ceased to describe the actual relations of men to measures.*

New principles divide the people by lines not coincident with former party divisions.

New measures have arisen which find advocates and opponents in both parties.

The great men who for thirty years have been the symbols of principles in whose name the people have been invoked have passed from among the living—and their measures have followed them. They have become *obsolete* by the lapse or the changes of time, or have been *adjusted* by the common sense of the people to their own satisfaction.

Among the obsolete and lifeless relics of former strife, we may venture to class the Bank of the United States, the alien and sedition laws, and the Virginia Resolutions of '98. If either of these topics be now invoked, it is for the fraudulent purpose of misleading the people by old prejudices away from practical and present interests. The men who advocated or opposed the Bank have passed from the stage. The spirit which dictated the alien and sedition laws is as dead as John Adams: and the terror which fathered that tyranny has passed hence to plague those who troubled our repose. The resolutions of '98, at the death of Father Ritchie, ceased to have a meaning when they lost their last expounder.

The great questions of domestic and administrative policy which agitated the era of Andrew Jackson, have been adjusted by practical compromises, satisfactory to the common sense, and consistent with the business interest of the people. The people have passed in silence the theories of constitutional law and political economy propounded by political leaders. They have rebuked the extremes of both parties as equally inconsistent with the public welfare, and the

quiet and healthful conduct of affairs. They have manifested a resolution to accept and maintain a moderate course of policy, consistent at once with the vigor of the Government and the freedom of industry, aiding all pursuits and burthening none, and inaugurating the Government as the common protector of all, and not the partizan nor the rival of any.

This policy has been most signally illustrated in the legislation touching the currency, the tariff, and internal improvements.

The people have resolved that it is impolitic to confide the regulation of the currency and trade of the country to a great private corporation: and they have retained that power in the hands of the Government, and embodied their policy in laws which may be varied to suit the shifting phases of events.

The people have refused to burthen the industry of the country with a high protective tariff. But they have also refused to deny the Government all power to protect and foster their own industry by incidental adjustments of the tariff. The people have taken the common sense medium and embodied in the tariff of 1846 the principle that Congress shall so adjust the necessary burthen of taxation as to protect *to that extent* their domestic industry, mechanical, commercial, agricultural or manufacturing.

The people have refused to entangle and burthen the General Government with a vast system of internal improvements which might be corrupting, which must be partial, and could not be so well accomplished by it as by State or corporate enterprise.

But they have refused to deny to their Government the power to protect their commercial industry by light-houses and harbors, by clearing rivers and building moles, by aiding in the opening of roads necessary for military defence or postal transit in the distant, unfrequented and defenceless quarters of the Republic. On the contrary the people have distinctly approved of moderate and judicious appropriations of money or land for the construction of such works of a national character as are reasonably required for the common benefit, are beyond the reach of individual enterprise and not attainable by State legislation.

To these three great adjustments the Statutes at Large and the Journals of Congress bear unequivocal testimony.

Around these three great topics centred the long warfare from the days of John Quincy Adams to the days of James K. Polk.

Then the Mexican war, the annexation of Texas, the acquisition of California introduced new elements into the contest. Parties organized exclusively with reference to a previous state of things, no longer coincided on these new questions. Real differences were compromised, disguised and patched up by fraudulent platforms for the purposes of an election; but the first real collision with practical events showed the absence of any real unity. The old questions had passed away. Yet the people were made to elect men because they were for or against a tariff, for or against a bank, whigs or democrats—in order to vote on the fugitive slave bill, the territorial government bill, the admission of California, the Pacific

rail road bill, and multitudes of other measures of which the people heard nothing and knew nothing till they were informed of their pendency in Congress through the newspapers. The voice of the people has not been expressed directly on any great public measure in either house of Congress for ten years. The Government has been placed in commission, and the great seal delivered to party leaders, small men, mousing politicians who have crept into power on both sides in the name of obsolete interests, without once consulting the people on the matters of living interest.

The people at last felt that party ties no longer related to the public interests of this day: and on the decay of their interest which alone gives life and legitimacy to party organizations, personal ambitions and private interests have substituted the system of paying for partizan service by the public offices, till *an election has degenerated from an open inquest for the opinion of the people, to the simple question of who shall have the offices.*

In this unholy scramble every faction, every passion, every sectional interest, even religious and sectarian influences have been arrayed, and the peace and purity of the country prostituted for the benefit of political adventurers.

It was an evil day for the republic when the great men of the early republic first sought the aid of official patronage to incline the scales of victory in a real contest; their smaller followers have abused the weapon without their excuse.

No man now denies that the direct personal interest of seekers of office has unduly influenced the last three presidential elections. The disappointed have united with the defeated to eject the victorious parties. Scandalous quarrels over the spoils have humbled the cabinet in the eyes of the people. They feel that they have been bought and sold by the value of their own offices created for their own benefit.

Each party has striven to discredit the other by imputing in the South improper intimacies with the abolitionists: while at the North each party has bargained for their aid, taken them into its pay, and after the election deliberately divided with them the spoils. They did this because parties were nearly balanced, the abolitionists could turn the scale, and the contest being merely for office, a part might well be sacrificed to obtain the rest!

Large masses of foreigners are cast yearly on our shores, ignorant of our laws and language, and still greater strangers to the moderation and self-control of American republicanism. Their national sympathies united them socially; politicians looking out for mercenaries found them indifferent between the factions and willing to vote for pay: and the scandalous spectacle has been exhibited of these citizens of foreign birth, sympathies and interests, bought and embodied by thousands and marched to the polls to decide American government. They have claimed and received their pro rata share of the offices they helped to obtain.

This same vile scramble for illegitimate aid in con-

trolling the offices of the Government has led us to the brink of civil war. It was to buy the favor of the South that the Nebraska Bill re-opened the slavery question without any one State interested in it calling for it or wishing it. A Congress elected without the slightest reference to such a bill forced on the people all the dangers of that terrible agitation; and now we are threatened with all the dangers of an equally uncalled for agitation for its repeal.

The same corrupt bidding for illegitimate influence embodied for the first time in the laws of the United States the right of unnaturalized foreigners to vote in a territorial government. Foreigners owing allegiance to European sovereigns now have a final voice in deciding the greatest question an American can be required to decide—the principles of the first constitution which the Territory shall wear when transformed into a State, and the question of freedom or slavery in its fundamental law.

The last bribe offered was the rich dowry of the public domain. The gratitude of the Republic has rewarded its defenders by donations of public land. Party leaders felt inspired to signalize their gratitude at the public expense; and the Homestead Bill devoted the public domain to the pay of mercenary partizans, native and foreign. The least return they could make would be to vote for the hand that fed and housed them.

These things have opened the eyes of the American people to the real nature of party tyranny.

They see that it is the perversion of party organizations from public interests to subserve the interests of individual ambition.

When they represent community of opinion spontaneously uniting in associations for the accomplishment of ends of public interest, and freely dissolving on their attainment, they are a natural and not deleterious offspring and form of free government.

But in their nature they are like military organizations, and tend to stifle the freedom of opinion and to substitute the will and interests of the party leaders for that of the citizens. Their members are like volunteers for a campaign, free to enlist or to refuse, but once enlisted bound by the word of command.

If not disbanded at the end of the struggle, they become a standing army in the midst of a community, silencing the public will or speaking in its name, a power dangerous to free institutions, a mercenary instrument ready made for mischief in ambitious hands.

To feed, to pay, to keep together and control the two great parties which for twenty years have disputed and disposed of the administration of the Government, have been the occasion of the bribery, the abuse of patronage, the unworthy compliances, the pandering to factious organizations, the pampering of foreign influence, the tampering with the peace of the Union, the trifling with dangerous sectional passions which have so long afflicted and disgraced the country.

The purpose of the American party is to redress these evils by substituting government by the *people*, for Government by a *party*.

The first principle of our Government is to bring

the people directly into contact with it. For twenty years they have been able to influence it only through the party dominant for the time, or by ejecting it in elevating its rival. In either event *a system of party organization, led by party leaders, intervened between the Government and the people.*

Parties have been the instruments for governing the people: and ambitious men inspired them and shaped them to their purposes.

They originated during the great contest of the Jackson era, on a few definite points. As new topics arose the leaders embraced them within the party creed, to be maintained or opposed by all. As time and the contest progressed the platform expanded, till every question of policy, every object of legislation was embraced by some party formulary, consecrated by party associations, and indurated into fixed principles of political belief and action—the criteria of approval or condemnation of men and measures. The merit or demerit of the particular measure or the particular candidate was merged absolutely in consideration of their relations to the theory of the party inscribed on the *platform*. The feeling of party sympathy imperceptibly changed into the theory of *party unity*. The habit of associated action became fixed in the theory of party allegiance. To leave the party was to be a traitor. To follow the conscientious convictions of the mind covered the person with suspicion. To vote for one not of the same party was a scandal. Good men were dragged by a rabble to the polls for the support of men and measures they detested. The duties of citizenship and the

interest of the country were secondary to the duties of the partizan and the interest of the party.

Then came the day of hollow platforms—false and hypocritical symbols of unity where there was no unity—convenient disguises for irreconcilable diversities—easy of exposition on the hustings and still more easy to be forgotten in the halls of Congress. It was not the differences which were dishonest, but was the attempt to disguise them. The parties pretended to maintain the same views on the same subjects of legislation every where. They had done so originally; but times and men had changed as well as the interest of the country and they did so no longer. So the symbols of unity were purposely ambiguous, that diversities of interpretation might provide for diversities of interest: and fraud was winked at to insure, when party tyranny could not coerce real unity, the unity of voting at the polls. In Pennsylvania *both* parties were for a tariff—in Carolina both parties opposed a tariff. Both parties favored the river and harbor bill in the North-West and West; both parties denied its constitutionality in the South. Both parties in the West were for lavish disposition of the public lands for local improvement: both parties in the South and East clung tenaciously to those lands as a common trust fund for the general benefit. Both parties in the East wished to foster the navy, encourage ocean steam enterprise, and guard every point of the coast by frowning fortifications: while the South and West felt small interest in a protection they did not feel the

need of, and little concern in a rivalry in which they could not compete.

Yet these were the precise matters on which parties had been organized, on which they pretended to be at unity from Maine to Georgia, and to vote on which they assembled from the East and the West, from the North and the South, in the Halls of Congress, with adverse faces, votes and voices to wrangle, to shuffle, to log-roll, to compromise, to divide the plunder, and to cheat the people.

But the territorial debates of 1850 gave the death-blow to both these parties. They met together to plunder; they stood face to face—old, decrepid, weak and false, rallying followers in obsolete watch-words; but all ears were holden by different tones.

The people were alive to their great interest in the stake for which gamesters were playing. The debates and votes ran across the ranks of these antiquated parties: friend and foe were found commingled or opposed promiscuously: and from the clangor and confusion of the conflict there broke on the country the conviction that party lines were obliterated, party names were only names, and that men of both parties were patriots and factionists discriminated only by being for or against the Constitution and the Union.

The consummation of the great measures of 1850, were the crowning acts of the great leaders of the warfare of the last twenty years, who were found at last together doing good work for their common country; but when the work was done the two great parties lay around them in fragments.

In 1852, the rumps of two broken-down and discredited factions usurped the names of national parties, entered the field under old platforms—and waged a scandalous contest of bribery and fraud, which ended in the elevation of President Pierce.

In his train the representatives of every vile, obscure and abandoned faction crossed the thresholds of the White House. The faction of the secessionists in the person of Mr. Jefferson Davis, the faction of the political papists in the person of Mr. Campbell, the faction of the freesoilers in the person of Mr. McLelland and Mr. Marcy took their seats at the cabinet council table, the faction of the foreigners with naturalization papers in their pockets illustrated American manners and guarded American interests abroad in the persons of Mr. Soulé, Mr. Belmont!!—

*At home*, the protection of the Union was confided to its foes.

*Abroad*, the interests and honor of the republic were confided to the impartial arbitrament of aliens.

Such is the origin, the history, the end of government by parties.

II. Against this humiliating domination, the American people in the second year of the administration of President Pierce revolted.

The American Party is that revolt organized to restore the deliberative age of the Government.

They will recall to the minds of the people the long neglected principles of the primitive republic, by the voice of free debate in the people's Houses of Congress.

They profess no unity but that which the Constitution requires.

They demand adhesion to no principles but those which lie at the foundation of the Constitution.

They impose no tests and inflict no exclusions but those which are self-imposed by fidelity to those fundamental principles.

They respect and will guard from invasion those diversities of opinion flowing from diversity of interests which are entitled to be heard.

Our only unity is in maintaining the integrity of the Constitution in all its principles and provisions; in the exclusion of every sinister, illegal or corrupting influence from all bearing in the obtaining or retaining the control or directing the conduct of the Government, whether such influence be foreign sympathies, sectional prejudices, sectarian influences, or official corruption by official patronage; in confining the President to his true function of executor of the laws; and in asserting the absolute right to representation of every diversity of local interest before the general arbitrament of the whole people of America in Congress assembled.

One great object is to exclude, as an element of party strength and as topics of party debate, every invocation of influences, feelings, prejudices and interests unfit in themselves to influence American Government; to substitute for them public and honest considerations of national interest and policy as the motives presiding over political combinations and objects; and to rescue the great industrial interests of the nation from the vicissitudes of party warfare—the dice for the gamester in the game of ambition.

1. We hold it to be a fundamental principle that American Republicans alone are entitled to rule the American Republic.

This principle is practically violated when foreigners by birth and feelings hold and wield the casting vote in the divisions of American parties.

They violate it who appeal to those foreign voters not less than they who yield to such an appeal—whether the inducements be foreign sympathies or a promised share of the fruits of success.

The early laws of the Republic were formed to avert this evil; but they were subsequently relaxed; few emigrants sought our shores, and no man dared to use them as a stepping stone to power; and no man dreamed that China would flood the western shores of the Republic with her pagan millions. But recent events have changed the conditions of the problem; and recent experience has shown the necessity of modifying our policy in order to maintain the integrity of the government.

We alone of all the nations of the world are free. We alone have been able to maintain in dignity and peace a great republic.

Our success is not the result of written constitutions nor of democratic laws: for both have elsewhere existed, yet no where else has freedom abode with them.

Our success flows from the character, the civil and political prudence, the moderation and temper of the American Republicans who have framed and enforced our republican constitutions. The American Republicans are a compound of freedom and submission to

law, personal independence and self-control, a keen sense of legal right with an equally keen sense of the duty of legal obedience, a patience under wrong till a legal remedy can be obtained, a promptness to remedy whatever act experience may prove to have been a blunder, and a practical intelligence in devising the remedy which no other people have shewn. They are penetrated with the spirit of democracy which prompts them to confer on all men equal privileges before the law; but at the same time they are imbued with the practical instincts of the statesman which divine the limits within which that democratic spirit may be indulged consistently with public order, and they cling to those external institutions of government which are the necessary representatives and instruments of the public will.

This principle, that American Republicans alone should rule the Republic is distinctly expressed in our naturalization laws which require a knowledge of and attachment to the Constitution as the condition on which citizenship is conferred. These vital requisites have in practice dwindled to mere forms. We wish to restore them to effectual power.

A long and humiliating experience has shewn that this knowledge and attachment—those qualities which sum up the character of American Republicans as above described, and as our laws suppose it to be—are found to flourish only in Americans by birth, education and feeling.

While admitting the right of all men to liberty, our laws have never admitted all men to the rights of citizenship. No Negro, no Indian, could ever

become naturalized: for it was *assumed* they could not become American Republicans. The thousands of Chinese who swarm on the Pacific Coast cannot be naturalized: for our laws presume them incapable of receiving the seeds of American Republicanism. Only *free white* persons—only persons of European race—are now capable of being naturalized. They are so only because our liberal instincts led our fathers to extend as far as they durst the privileges of citizenship. We are equally free to limit that freedom for the future.

We say that experience has demonstrated that the great mass of European emigrants are unfit recipients of American citizenship without a longer and more thorough probation.

In practice the great mass of naturalized citizens are found not to have that knowledge of and attachment to our American institutions which fit them for safe recipients of political power.

If they be unfit, their numbers and rapid increase make them no longer insignificant, but a dangerous element of political power.

From 1790 to 1800 the emigrants were 50,000— from 1800 to 1810 they were 70,000—from 1810 to 1820 they were 114,000—from 1820 to 1830 they were 200,000—from 1830 to 1840 they were 472,727. They *now* exceed 500,000 in each year. More emigrants swarm in our ports, and flood the streets of our towns, competing with our mechanics, artizans and laborers, in each year *now* than came in any ten years before 1840!!!

It is folly to apply laws made in 1802 for 10,000

emigrants in the year to a time when they have swollen to 500,000 in each year.

Their character has changed as much as their numbers.

*Then* they were a few peaceable and harmless exiles flying from the guillotine and begging an asylum.

*Now* the immigration is the exodus of the enslaved millions of Europe, Irish, Dutch, Germans, Italians and French, who despairing of freedom at home and having proved their incompetency for self-government *in fact*, flying from the lost field, throw themselves on our hospitality and abuse it by selling themselves as a mercenary army to decide our elections. They renounce their foreign allegiance but not their foreign feelings. They will not coalesce with American citizens nor cherish American principles. They remain a distinct class, voting apart, living apart, forming foreign associations, political, social and military, and demanding from political employers their share of political patronage. Not content with living on us and governing us under existing laws, they propose to improve them. They aspire to play reformers; and insolently form associations and devise plans to improve our homely American liberty into the likeness of the bloody and drunken dream of French and German liberty. They are no more American in heart than they are in birth, in language or in blood. They come flaming from the furnace of rebellion and civil discord, where oppression has perverted liberty into anarchy and confounded the authority of law with lawless tyranny, and fall like firebrands in our midst to disturb and exasperate

the sedate and moderate conduct of American politics.

This experience has demonstrated that these men should not be invested with the symbols of American sovereignty till they are qualified to wield them in the spirit of American Republicans.

To Congress the Constitution confides the naturalization laws. We propose so to modify them as to insure a unity of feeling and sympathy between the foreign and native citizen ere the rights of citizenship be conferred. The immigrant must shew that he is *Americanized* before he will be received as an American citizen. He must be fit for the privilege before it should be bestowed.

The States confer the privileges of the vote. We will appeal to the States to interpose a period of probation between naturalization and voting which will enable the foreigner to become acquainted with the duties which preside over the exercise of the right, teach him the magnitude of the outrage of prostituting our vote to the gratification of foreign sympathies, and remove the temptation to the yearly scandal of seeing the United States Courts crowded on the eve of an election with thousands of applicants for power to control American elections the following day.

We will tolerate no appeal to naturalized citizens for their votes: and we will vote for no man guilty of so flagrant a violation of the principles of our Constitution.

By our American law office is the right of no one. It is not a property, but a trust—not even to be

claimed by any merit however great, but only bestowed on meritorious persons at the will of the people. It is the endowing of an individual with a part of the sovereign power of the people. It places them at his mercy to the extent of his official power. He may by being false overwhelm us with ruin or serious disaster.

We therefore think it not fit that any person not of American birth shall be trusted with American office—not because it is valuable and so should be retained, but because it is a trust whose abuse may be ruin, and it may be, as it has been, used as pay for foreign influence in our elections.

We therefore will not elect or appoint any person of foreign birth to American offices.

2. Our mission is to vindicate the integrity of the American principle that the State is neutral in matters of religion—that the State has no right to prescribe laws for religious worship, and that no citizen of any sect has a right to make his religious views or sectarian relationship a ground of political action, whether for himself or for any other.

The State does not ask and will not listen to the statement of any man's creed as a reason for any law. It looks on every man alike, whether Papist, or Greek, or Methodist, or Mormon, lays down one law for all, and punishes with impartial rigor its violation.

It affords to every religious association equal protection for its public worship against violation or disturbance, equal security in holding the necessary property, equal freedom in the education of its

children; but it is careful to protect the citizen against the undue influence of the minister of religion; it protects the State from the dangerous accumulation of mortmain property by limiting its quantity and prescribing its tenure exclusively with reference to the safety and policy of the State, and irrespective of the canons or preferences of any sect; and, proclaiming the absolute freedom of thought and speech as its fundamental principles, it founds public schools where every citizen may be freely instructed in everything that pertains to a good citizen, carefully excluding every thing of sectarian religion, but listening to no plea for the exclusion of anything else—least of all does it listen to any sect asking that its children may be exempted from the universal freedom of thought, which the State asserts to be the right of the citizen as well as the interest of the Republic.

It will not allow any religious reason to be good ground to vary any law: it looks to the common reason and conscience of mankind as its only rule, and the good of the State as its only limit.

It would not fail to punish a Mormon for bigamy, to fine a Quaker for refusing military service, to imprison a Papist for disobeying a habeas corpus for a nun.

It is a part of the same blessed system, that no man of any sect shall appeal to his sectarian associates to unite in any political act for any object, religious or political. If a religious association need a law, they must put themselves on the footing of *petitioners*. Their appeal is to the impartial arbitrament of the

State. Their claim must be preferred as a private claim, asking a private privilege from the body of the State. They have no right to call on all their associates to vote for men pledged to their interest, any more than a private person can uncorruptly agree to vote for a delegate on a promise to prefer and vote for his claim to money or land. The party in each instance is bound to abstain from making his private interest, personal or sectarian, the ground of a public act. He is bound to vote on public and political considerations, and then to prefer by petition his private or sectarian interest.

Thus preferred no sect has ever suffered injustice at the hands of an American legislature. The nearest approach to such an act was the confiscation of the glebe lands in Virginia.

On these principles the American Republic has for eighty years governed, protected and blessed a vast population, in peace and harmony, embracing every sect of christianity, and many persons of religion not christian. The Indian has worshipped the Great Spirit, the Jew the God of Abraham, the Unitarian the Only God. The Baptist has been free to dip in the infallible water, and the Papist to confide in the infallible Pope, the disciples of Calvin to preach the infallible decrees and the disciples of Voltaire to mock at the fallibility of all the infallibles. The Chinese has raised his Pagodas to Buddhist faith and the philosophy of Confucius; the Mormon has propagated the faith of the Prophet Joe. The Papist has taught the Catechism of Trent, the Presbyterian that of Westminster, the Episcopalian that of *the*

*Church.* No man has made any of them afraid: all have been children of the Republic, equally dutiful in their obedience, equally ardent in their love, and till recently equally professing the great American principle of the absolute severance of religion from the State, and abstaining from its violation.

Within the last ten years, for the first time in the history of the Republic, this great principle of religious peace has been gravely violated.

The Mormons made a church which usurped all the functions of the State: its members adhered to the supremacy of Joe Smith, and systematically disobeyed the laws of Missouri and Illinois, and they were summarily expelled from their limits. They have founded a territory in the wilderness: but wise men do not see their way to a peaceful adjustment of their conflicting claims with the principle of American freedom: and the future must solve the problem.

Three thousand ministers of various denominations united in a remonstrance against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise on religious grounds; but Congress would allow no religious influence to bear on its political action; and one cry of indignation from the people at once and forever rebuked and silenced that gross invasion of the rights of the State. It was a part of the abolition madness.

The other violation has been the array of the Papists to influence American elections for political or sectarian objects. They have gone in masses to the polls to exclude the Bible from the Public Schools, in violation of the fundamental principles of freedom of thought for every man. They have gone

there to divide the school fund, and for an assignment to them of a share proportioned to their free school children—thus making the State the paymaster and partizan of religious sects, adding the fuel of pecuniary reward to the blazing zeal of religious and sectarian hate and emulation, and destroying the peace of the State by entangling alliances for subsidising the war of the sects. They have thrown votes to take the vast mass of the ecclesiastical property out of the hands of lay trustees to whom the law and policy of the States confided it, and to concentrate it in the hands and under the absolutely irresponsible and arbitrary control of the Bishops in the several States freed even from the semblance of a trust which the law could enforce—thus violating the law of the land, causing the trustees to commit a breach of their trust, and creating a despotic power in the hands of one man equally inconsistent with the freedom of the Catholic laity which the policy of the State guarantees, and dangerous to the peace of the State itself.

For these objects a political agitation has swept over the land from Massachusetts to California, simultaneous and universal wherever a Catholic vote existed sufficient to make itself felt in elections, municipals, state or federal. In Ohio, in Pennsylvania, in New York, in Maryland the whole politics of the State have been thrown into excitement and confusion, by this sinister intervention of sectarianism in politics. Scandalous negotiations have been conducted in secret, and have borne fruits openly. In more than one political contest the Catholic vote has been bartered for power. In Maryland, Catholics

by the hundred deserted the whig ranks to vote for the Catholic Lowe; and nearly the whole Catholic vote in the United States went to swell the agglomeration of all the factions whose united stream lifted Pierce to the presidency. Conspiracies like these justly roused the American people to a state of indignation; and then came the proclamation of Bishop Hughes to his children of New York, exhorting the peace in the tones of sedition borrowed from Anthony's burial of Cæsar. He allowed not a night to pass after his landing on our shores before he fulminated a vituperative and insolent defiance against a law of New York, which placed the tenure of all ecclesiastical property of every sect in the hands of the people, inciting the faithful of the church to be unfaithful to the State, and to evade by legal quibbles or secret violations a law which it was his duty as a good citizen to have been the first to exhort his people to obey in spirit and in letter

These things have justly shaken the confidence of the American people in their Catholic fellow citizens.

We know that hundreds of Catholic gentlemen deplore this ill advised agitation; but they have not openly rebuked it: all by their silence have associated themselves in it.

They deny that the Catholic Church holds or has propounded the dogma of the spiritual supremacy in civil matters. We do not dispute the question with them. It is none of our business what are the *dogmas or belief* of Catholics on the papal supremacy, or any other point. We look only to *their civil conduct*.

If they mean to say that *all* Catholics do not hold the right of the church to meddle in political affairs, we agree with them.

If they say that *no* Catholics hold the right of the church to meddle in political affairs, they are either very ignorant, or suppose us to be very ignorant.

Whether that right have been formally *defined* by competent authority is matter interesting to Catholics alone: we are concerned only with the plainer matter of fact, that the right is asserted and acted on practically in Europe and in this Republic, by vast numbers among both the priests and the laity. In the United States, it has for several years been acted on avowedly, or acquiesced in silently by the great mass of Catholics, native and foreign.

American Catholics with American principles in their bosoms—and we know not a few such—have small right to complain that we confound them with the crowd of foreign Papists whose acts they do not approve. They associate themselves to the acts of the foreign Papists by silence. They could rebuke them and do not. If they fear the effect of an open rebuke, are they not giving too good ground for the fear that they prefer the apparent unity of their church to the integrity of the Republic? If they will not distinguish themselves from the foreign Papists by their conduct, by taking the part of the Republic against their fellow religionists who are perverting their church while they are corrupting the State, can they justly blame us for not making a discrimination which they do not give us the means to make? They have not even the excuse that their church being a unit in

faith they fear to fracture it; for their very defence is that this right to meddle in civil affairs is not a part of, but a perversion of their creed, an usurpation and not a religious right. We earnestly implore them not longer to expose themselves to misconstruction and the Republic to danger; but give us welcome proof that there are American Catholics worthy of their republican fathers of the Revolution.

When Catholic gentlemen say it is no part of Catholic faith, they relieve the question from all complication with that of religious toleration. We do not enquire whether the church have any dogma at all on the subject. We do not ask the source, we stop at the fact of political intrigue and agitation resulting in the array of the whole mass of Roman Catholic votes at the polls; and that we say is anti-republican and dangerous.

We know that in Europe, in the most faithful of Catholic Kingdoms, the Roman Catholics are divided from top to bottom on this very practical question of the relation of the civil to the ecclesiastical power: we know that more than one concordat has attempted to compromise it.

We know the party of the ultra-montanists or Papists maintain the supremacy of the spiritual over the civil power, assert and act on their right to political power. Their ideal is the spiritual monarchy of Hildebrand: they fail to realise it only because of the perverse obduracy of the times. To this party belong the great mass of the clergy, and a small minority of the laity of Roman Catholic Europe. It is the despotic party. Its heart is in Rome.

We know equally well that the party of the Gallicans or Catholics, repel as rudely as do any Protestants the intrusion of the priests and the spiritual power in political affairs and assert the exemption of the State from spiritual control or influence for any purpose. They confide in the *Catholic people* in the *State* against the *Papist priests* in the *church*. To this party belong the great mass of the *people* in *all Roman Catholic countries* of Europe, and a small minority of the priests. They are the liberal party of Europe, and there fight the battle of religious and political liberty.

It is a party division among Roman Catholics themselves—between the party of freedom and the party of despotism, civil and religious, the people in the state and the priests in the church. It has literally nothing to do with the differences between Protestants and Romanists. Within the last ten years the ultra-montane Papists have simultaneously in Sardinia, in Baden, in Holland, in Spain, in Switzerland, in France, invaded the peace and assailed the power of the civil governments in Catholic hands under the precise pretexts beneath which they have *here* in the United States concealed or defended their violation of the ballot box and their audacious intrusion into the arena of politics and now the chief danger to the liberal governments of Spain and Sardinia arises from the wrath of the Papist party at the assertion of the civil supremacy, and the control of the Church property by the State.

We moot with them no question of supremacy.

We deny the right of any religious sect to political influence for any purpose religious or political.

American Romanists were all of the Gallican party, sound and manly republicans. They have been overborne by the flood of ignorant Papists with which the tide of immigration from Catholic Europe yearly deluges our shores, led by Papist priests of foreign birth and habits of political action, ambiguous divided or foreign allegiance, educated at Rome to govern America, who wielding this vast political power have seduced our fellow citizens from the paths of republican peace which their fathers trod into this deplorable pursuit of sectarian power on the thorny field of political warfare.

THEY follow *here* only the trade *they* follow abroad. The Jesuits have been successively expelled from nearly every Catholic kingdom in Europe because they would meddle in political intrigues. We have no reason to wonder that they have not neglected so tempting a field as our free institutions open to their arts. We confide in the sound sense of *American* Catholics to see the deplorable error their spiritual leaders have led them to commit: and in their manliness to arrest the evil by confining their priests to the altar where none will molest them. We trust in American Catholics to restore to us an American priesthood.

To the suggestion that their union is to repel aggression, we reply, what they call aggression is the American mode of maintaining the American principle of the severance of religion and politics compromised by their conduct; and that the fact of the

present union of Catholics, regardless of all other political differences, for the very purpose of revenging their sectarian defeat is a confession of the crime laid to their charge. Is it not again Ithuriel's spear which has revealed, not created the monster he suspected?

If this sectarian union for political influence to procure sectarian benefit, whether touching education, or ecclesiastical property, or the preservation of priestly influence be denied to exist *in point of fact*, we appeal to the notorious events of the last five years, and to the now existing fact of the union of the whole foreign Roman Catholic vote with the democratic party.

If other proof be asked, we say no one asks it but they who are the chief actors in the game—and we may well be spared the trouble of proving what they know. The American people will begin to revise their conviction when they again see foreign Roman Catholics heartily voting on two sides of a political question. Till then the fact is a confession which dispenses with other proof.

If, admitting the *fact*, the partizans of foreign priests say it is intolerance and persecution to refuse their demands and to repel their efforts to procure them, we reply, they are scarcely fit interpreters of the American law of religious freedom, which they deny while they invoke, and under which we were born. We mean to interpret our own laws in our ancestral mode. We will not be misled by using old words in new senses, nor yield any power the State has been

used to exercise because foreign priests fresh from the Propaganda impeach us of intolerance.

We have a written law defining the extent and the limits of *our* religious freedom and its relation to the State; and by that alone we will be judged. We are united to vindicate its integrity against insidious hostilities, waged on principles inconsistent with its existence, in its name but for its overthrow.

We do not ask what their dogmas, their faith or their discipline in matters religious. We are utterly indifferent about them. But we will not permit any religious combination for political objects; we will not allow any such combination to screen itself under the cloak of religious faith or discipline; we will not abandon our absolute freedom of thought, reading and investigation in our public schools; and if any one choose to make such freedom against his conscience, then *between such a perverted conscience and the fundamental principles of our free Republic we will adhere to the latter.*

3. As the State is neutral in matters of religion, and the United States does not recognize the difference between native and foreign citizens, and therefore it is a violation for naturalized citizens and for religious sects to make those relationships the foundation of political action: so the *Constitution makes the Union neutral in the great controversy on the lawfulness and expediency of slavery in the States.*

That subject is local. It is confined to the several States, and it is in no manner placed within the jurisdiction of Congress either to favor or to repress that institution.

We therefore will not tolerate any agitation of the subject of slavery in national politics. We will permit no appeal to the sectional prejudices on that subject; and we regard men as unfit to be entrusted with any share in the national government who shall strive to entangle the general government with either interest in this controversy.

The policy and the law of the Union is neutrality. We abide by that law; and we will tolerate no discussion of this sectional interest in national politics. We recognize the wide diversity of opinion prevailing in different portions of the Union; a difference coeval with the Constitution, and one which it was careful to recognize and compromise; and we accept that compromise as our highest law on this subject—the only sure hope of peace and union. Our fathers rested it on *non-intervention*.

Therefore the General Government shall not directly or indirectly encourage or discourage, extend or restrict slavery.

The Constitution imposes on Congress the duty of delivering up fugitives from labor; the law of 1850 executes that duty; and we abide by and will execute it.

It is unfit that Congress should make admission of a territory as a state to depend on its constitutional provisions touching slavery; and we will oppose any such test.

We think each territory should be left free to decide that question by the first constitution it adopts as a state.

We think the Nebraska—Kansas bill should so far

as regards slavery be not repealed; for our policy is peace; and to open that question renews the terrible collision of opposing passions and interests which has so recently and so gratuitously brought us to the brink of civil war.

Since Congress has no other power touching slavery it is an unfit topic of discussion in federal politics. We therefore are resolved to exclude from every office of profit or trust under the federal government any person who shall appeal directly or indirectly to the sympathies or antipathies of any person on that subject for the purpose of promoting any political end. Of *opinions*, we have no cognizance; but any *act* tending to bring that influence to bear in the field of politics we regard as hostile to the Union and a disqualification for the responsible trust of an office under the federal government.

To vindicate those three great fundamental principles of the American Republic, violated, denied or forgotten, in the selfish war of factions is our chief mission.

We mean that American citizens by birth, education, feeling, principle and temper knowing no allegiance but that of their mother-earth shall rule the republic; and that they shall not be controlled by foreign influences through naturalized citizens.

That sectional interests and hostilities shall not be invoked as elements of power, nor wielded as weapons in political contests, to the danger of the union of these states.

That religion shall not be a basis of political action for any purpose: and we will forbid and discour-

tenance every appeal to it open or secret as tending to compromise the interests of the state, and inconsistent with the peace of the country.

These disturbing elements once removed, our way will be clear to restore the Government to its primitive and simple principles, to bring back to its legislative halls the deliberative age of the republic, and to the executive mansion the spirit of lofty independence in the administration of the laws: so that the Government shall once again appear to be a wise contrivance for the protection of liberty, the administration of justice, and the promotion of the public prosperity.

We propound it as the fundamental principle of our free organization touching the general conduct of affairs—

4. That each district shall elect its representative to Congress, and each State its senators *according to the individual views, the peculiar interests, and the patriotic impulses of the voters.*

That these gentlemen shall bear to Congress the views and wishes of their constituents, free to guard and promote them with a due regard to the general welfare, and subject to no party trammels.

That the principle of conducting the Government shall be, the acceptance of the will of the people expressed by repeated legislative acts as the true exposition of the Constitution touching the ordinary topics of legislative policy; and the enacting of such moderate laws on those several subjects as shall appear best calculated to promote the general welfare, avoiding equally each extreme.

That on new topics, the elections shall indicate the will of the people, and the passage of an act by Congress be its final and authentic declaration, free from Presidential vetoes, and to be altered only by the people in the Houses of Congress.

We regard the people as having become wearied with executive intervention to defeat their will as authentically expressed by Congress, in matters of legislative expediency, or of national justice and policy: and we shall discountenance and resist any application of the veto to any other cases than those of legislation, manifestly hasty and inconsiderate, or grossly and palpably unconstitutional, or inflicting irreparable injury if not arrested—

By the Constitution we think the President is the common *executive* head of the nation. He is elected by all, because *all* have the same interest in the execution of all the laws every where.

He forms no part of the Legislature. He cannot from the nature of things represent the diversities of local views and interests with which Congress is charged: and therefore the selection of a President does not involve any decision of the people on the legislative policy of the Government: but that must be sought from the composition of the Congress.

His power of appointment is bestowed solely for the efficient *execution of the law*: and it is a perversion of the high prerogative to appoint or remove any man from office to influence the *making* the law.

The veto was bestowed for the protection of the President from encroachment, and the country from the evil effects of hasty, careless or factious legisla-

tion: and the right to use it is confined to cases of legislation flowing from those causes, whether constitutional or unconstitutional. It is in the nature of an appeal to the people against their chosen and peculiar representatives: and can only be properly used, when they have grossly, and plainly, and dangerously violated their duty. It is in the nature of an injunction to stay irreparable injury: and where such is not the case, the proper remedy lies in an appeal to the people at the polls. It is only in such cases this formidable power should be invoked: and we shall sternly discountenance any other use of it.

When the will of Congress has been once expressed, we regard it as the right and the duty of all the members, if the President attempt to arrest its enactment by his veto on other principles than those above indicated, to waive and sink their former opinions on the expediency of the measure in view of the expressed will of the majority, and to rebuke the perversion of the Presidential power by uniting to pass the rejected bill by a constitutional majority of two-thirds. This will be a republican remedy against this insolvent monarchical aggrandizement of the Presidential power.

We regard the people as firmly resolved, that the free conduct of affairs should be relieved from the sinister bias of the pursuit of office and the pressure of political patronage; and that the power of appointment conferred by the constitution on the President, solely with the view of enabling him to execute the laws, shall not be by him perverted into a powerful and direct control in making the laws. The people

of the States have remedied this evil in their State affairs by stripping the executive of the power he had abused. We would strive to introduce that reform into the affairs of the national government, and restore the Constitution to its primitive purity, by depriving the President of the absolute power of removal, by fixing a more permanent tenure of office than his will or party victory, by requiring the concurrence of the Senate for all discretionary removals, and as to all merely administrative officers, collectors, postmasters, marshals and clerks, by giving to the President only the power of suspension, and of final removal only after an inquiry in the nature of a court martial.

Congress thus freed from the sinister elements and influences which hitherto have stifled or perverted its echo of the popular voice, will again respond in its natural tone. The free conference will result in moderate legislation; the popular will find its expression in laws promoting the interests of the people; and the extreme theories of partizans be left as themes of vapid declamation to their disappointed professors.

We accept as the basis and law of our legislative policy on all matters hitherto controverted between the parties, those moderate compromises between adverse extremes which the people by their representatives in repeated acts of legislation have expressed themselves contented with, and which avoid the evils of the extreme affirmative and negative theories which threatened to obliterate all limits to

the federal power on the one hand, and to attenuate and fritter it away to a shadow on the other.

We regard the Constitution as a law made by practical men to provide for practical interests, and to be expounded so as to secure those general results which its powers contemplated while preserving in their absolute integrity the inherent and unassailable attributes of the sovereign right of the States—the one as indispensable as the other to be maintained, equally elements of our freedom and our power.

We regard the people as having manifested in the most authentic manner—

That the public lands shall not be squandered gratuitously on every idler who may see fit to squat on land he has not the energy to buy and therefore is not likely to reclaim:

That the currency ought not to be subjected to the control of any private corporation, but regulated by the laws of trade tempered by the moderate legislation and guardian care of the Government now embodied in acts of Congress:

That vast and expensive systems of roads, canals, rail roads ought not to be undertaken by the General Government: but that appropriation of reasonable amount, for harbors, rivers, light-houses and military or postal communications of a national character may be made: and that the Government may well aid in securing the great lines which must bind the Pacific with the Atlantic States into one indissoluble empire:

That a high protective tariff is at once unwise and needless; but while the wants of the Government shall continue to be supplied from duties, they may

and should be so distributed among the articles of consumption as to convert the burthen of taxation into an incidental relief to our agricultural, commercial, mechanical, and laboring classes with equal impartial justice—according to the principles of the tariff of 1846 and its subsequent modifications—

That the Navy and Army shall be kept in a state of perfect efficiency, ready for every emergency, adequate to the vindication of the national honor at home and abroad, and capable of adding new laurels to the arms of the Republic wrung from the brows of any insolent power which may challenge her to the combat:

That at foreign Courts no spurious republicans of foreign breed shall misrepresent the American Republic: but that sons of the soil who have known no other allegiance shall be sent to speak in no stammering tongue the sentiments of America in the ears of princes:

That while we will enforce our own laws against predatory enterprises from our shores against the territories of friendly powers, and disdain to accept such aid for any aggrandizement, we yet shall view with just sympathy every honest and manly effort by the people of any province for independence and republican freedom—reserving to ourselves the sole arbitrament of the fitness of our retaining or abandoning our neutrality as our own interests may require, but recognizing no absolute right of ultimate sovereignty any where but in the mass of the people of every country, and holding ourselves, according to the established policy and practice of the Republic from

the days of Washington, free and bound to look for the sovereign political power only to the actual possession, in our own international relations:

That while we cannot but express our disgust at the despotic misrule which prevails in European colonies and the officials governing them on our Southern borders, we acknowledge and will respect the existing possession of them in their present masters; but we equally recognize their right of revolution when in the judgment of the people it is fit and possible; and while we will not ourselves attempt or countenance any efforts from abroad to disturb existing relations, we shall expect that they shall be so governed as not to violate the laws of good neighborhood, nor to interpose obstacles to the freedom and safety of our commercial relations; and if they be allowed to become from any cause public nuisances in the highway of national intercourse, we hold ourselves free to abate them.

Our foreign policy is that of the Father of his Country—which has guided it in safety and honor from infancy to manhood—"in extending our commercial relations with European Nations to have with them as little political connexion as possible."

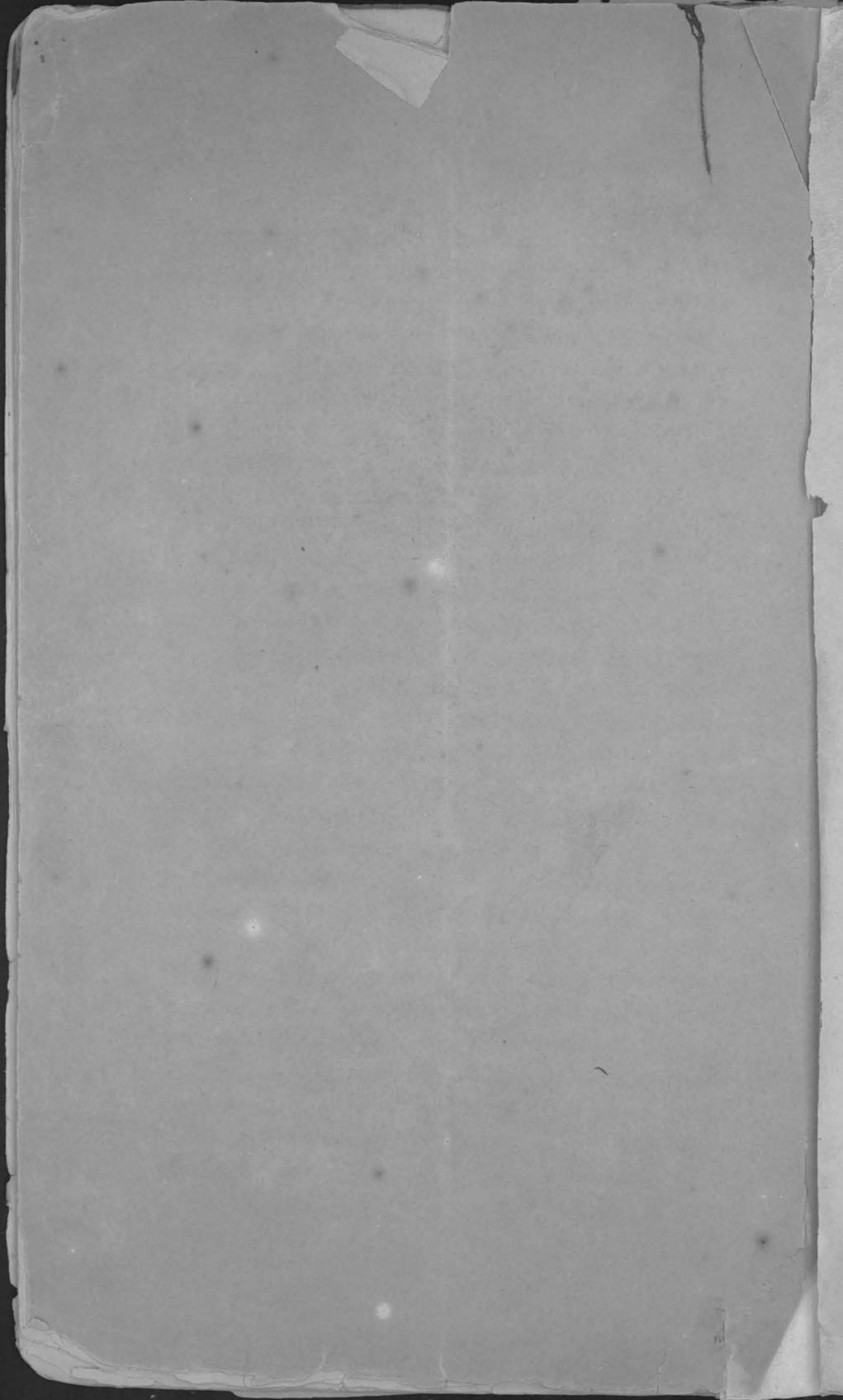
The time has come "when we may choose peace or war" as *our* interests guided by justice shall counsel; and *our* interests are the sole criterion.

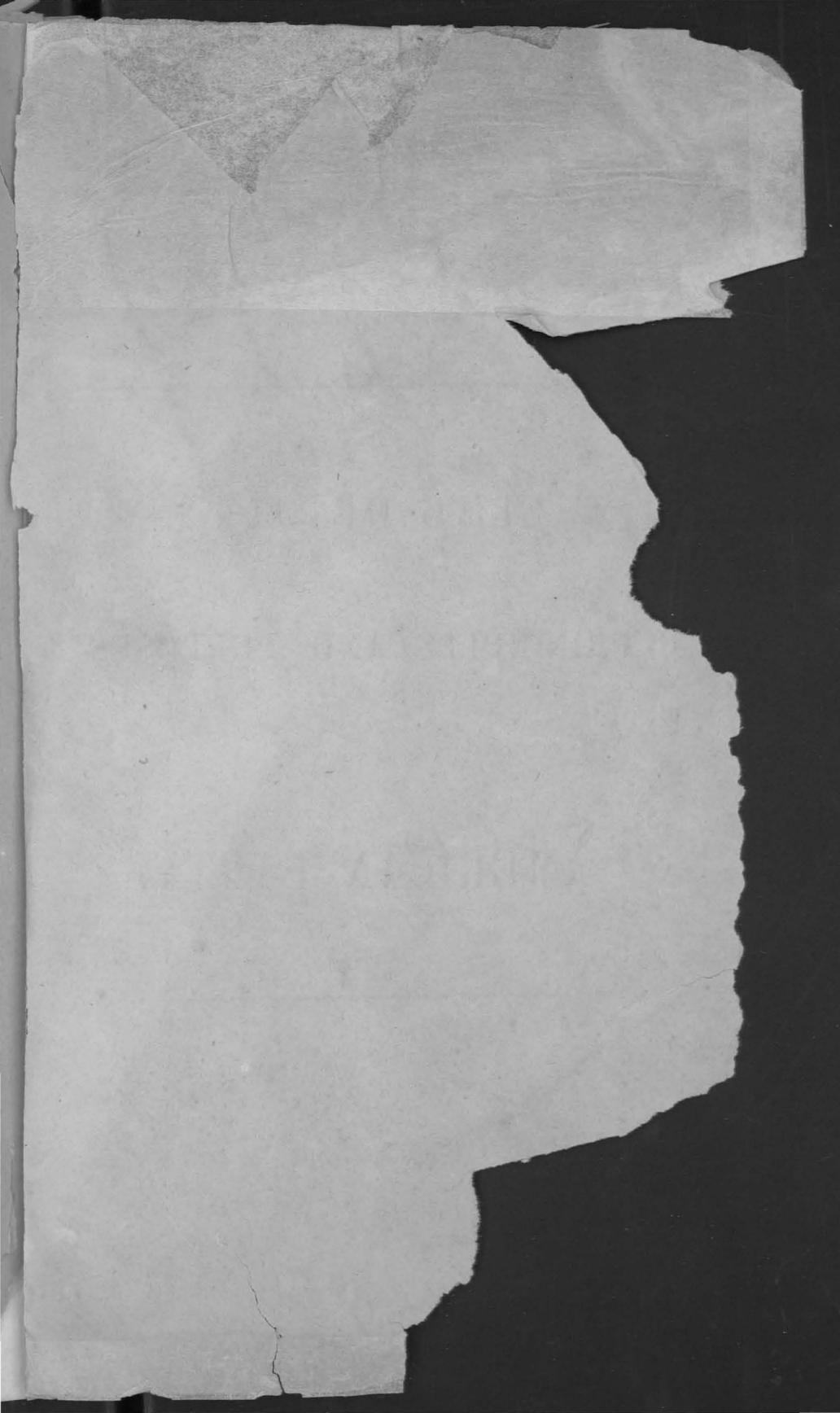
Our policy is peace; we wage no war but for the attainment of peace. We steer clear of all permanent alliances; we are not implicated in the European scuffle for the balance of power; we will assume no guaranty of national independence; we are no armed

propagandists to enforce non-intervention on European despots; we leave Europe to her fate till Europe threatens our safety or meddles with our interests; and then we meet and repel in arms the aggression from whatever quarter it come.

Our policy is not to meddle with European concerns which do not concern us; and to repel the meddling of European nations with American concerns which do not concern them.

These principles we have proclaimed in Philadelphia and ratified in Baltimore; and by them we are willing to be judged.





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