



F

185

.H37

Author _____

Title _____

Imprint _____





S P E E C H
OF
BENJAMIN G. HARRIS, ESQ.,
OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY
UPON THE
REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE
ON
SECRET SOCIETIES.
IN THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES OF MARYLAND.



MR. SPEAKER :

When a few evenings since the majority of the Committee on Secret Societies, made their report, and asked to be discharged from the further consideration of the subject, I entered my objection, and stated, that that majority had not performed the duties imposed upon them by the resolutions under which they received their appointment. I was unwilling, sir, that this House should take any action at the instance of that majority which even by implication could be looked upon as an approval of the course which they had thought proper to pursue. They have failed, sir, completely and, I may say, willfully, in the performance of their duties, and instead of our commendation, they should receive our stern rebuke.

What were those duties? They were instructed to *enquire* and report "whether any and what Secret Political Societies are known to exist in this State"—"whether any and what society or portion of the people of this State, or any of the United States, have introduced *religious issues*, into the field of *political agitation*." They were also instructed "to ascertain as far *as may be in their power*, what are the character and import of the *secrets* which are supposed to be held or maintained by such societies, if any such should be *found* to exist, and to use their *endeavours* to obtain if *possible*, a statement or description of the *principles, objects* and

purposes of such societies," and sir in order to furnish them with ever facility to carry out fully the enquiry, they were vested with the extraordinary power of sending for persons and papers, and of examining such persons upon oath. This Committee, sir, might well be called, as from its creation it has been called, the Committee of enquiry—the Investigating Committee—for their duties clearly and distinctly defined in their commission, were to make diligent search into *facts*, and facts only. This House surely did not expect from this Committee, thus raised, a relash of that political dish which nauseates every healthful and conservative stomach; they did not expect a new edition of Know Nothing quibbles and evasions. They expected, sir, and required, a statement of well authenticated *facts* in regard to the matter referred to this Committee, and yet sir not one *fact*, not one *paper*, not one *witness*, have they produced, or tried to produce, notwithstanding they were ordered expressly to make a *tremendous effort* to do so, and to overcome every thing but *impossibilities* in order to gratify the strongly expressed *desire* of this Honorable Body. They have to my surprise, and no doubt to the surprise of this House, not only been guilty of the sin of omission but of commission. They have presumptuously and daringly (and I here charge them with it,) exerted the mere brute power, which they had as a majority, entirely to smother all investigation. The minority of this Committee, anxious to perform their clearly defined duties were prevented by the majority from taking one step towards that end. The minority produced the names of witnesses to be brought before the Committee who would have testified to the very facts which were to be enquired into, and yet, sir, the majority, *fearful of the expense to the State* attending the summoning of those witnesses, and very probably more fearful of the testimony they would give, denied the privilege. Under this undoubted state of facts can any one here declare that this majority have fulfilled their duties, and should receive the approbation of this House? Could any one here, sir, have anticipated when this Committee was inaugurated, that such a report as this would have been the only result? When the Honorable Chairman introduced these resolutions, with such a *bragadocio* air, could any one have imagined that this grand proclamation—this *tremendous flourish of trumpets*—would usher nothing upon the stage, but GENERAL TOM THUMB. When the mountain thus quaked and labored, sending terror and consternation to the very heart of man, must not all be surprised that the product is only—a mouse? Such must indeed be the feeling of this House in viewing this report, and the sudden transition would make us laugh, if our disposition to do so were not restrained by our feelings of resentment for the contemptuous disregard of the order of this House, as displayed in the course of the majority of that Committee. As a literary production, sir, I will not undertake to criticise this report. If any merit of that kind can be found in it,

let it be awarded to the Honorable Chairman. But, sir, this I will say, that if in that respect this production would be an honor to an Irving, or an Everett, I would look upon it as of infinitely less value to the character of its author, and of the majority of this House, than would be the simplest statement of well avouched facts showing that he and they were innocent of the charges made against them by the Governor in his annual message.

The contemptible affectation that they were not aware that the Governor, in his animadversions on secret societies in his message, alluded to the Know Nothing party would set badly even upon a simpering school girl. It is diplomacy without ingenuity. It is hypocrisy without concealment. I assert, sir, without the fear of successful contradiction, that every member of that Committee, and every member of this House, knew as well as the Governor did, to what party he alluded. If so, then the Honorable Chairman, when he introduced his unfortunate resolutions, knew well, as did the other members of the Committee, what issues they had joined and what evidence was required to prove those issues. If upon this trial, their opponents, the minority, had failed to produce evidence to show that their party was a "*secret political society*," then they would have been relieved from that charge. Had the minority failed to show that that party had *introduced religious issues into the field of political agitation*, then that charge would have been justly dismissed, and if that minority had further failed to show that that party *held or maintained secrets, objects and purposes* violative of our Constitution and that of the United States, then, sir, the majority and their party here and elsewhere would have been relieved of the charge of being secret conspirators against their country, and been held responsible only for their open and avowed principles—a responsibility sufficiently awful for any whose consciences are not seared as with a red hot iron. This course of trial, so obviously the correct one for the ascertainment of truth was rather unpalatable to the majority of this Committee. They chose rather to rely upon the mere assertion of their and your innocence—an assertion worth less than nothing to you and them, if by your vote adopting this report, you shall avoid the investigation which you yourselves have inaugurated, thus strengthening suspicion of guilt, instead of furnishing proof of innocence. The question then, sir, which this House has to consider, is, whether by adopting this majority report and sanctioning their proceedings, they will allow themselves to be involved in a suspicion which such action would justify? It is to be hoped that this Honorable Body will have more self-respect and a higher regard for public opinion than to do so.

But, sir, let us now enquire, what were the reasons for the course which the majority of the Committee have thought proper to pursue in regard to this investigation? These are *glimmeringly* alluded to in the report presented by the Chairman, but in order to see them more distinctly, let us go to their committee room,

(fortunately not a dark-lanterned cavern) and find them out there. My honorable friend from Charles county, (Mr. Merrick) has given them, in the minority report, an unenviable chance for notoriety as well as preservation.

The first reason given was contained in a resolution offered in that room, and declares in effect that the Governor in his *reply* to the Committee *clearly indicates* the American Party of the Platform of 1855, as the object of the animadversions in his message. This, sir, that Committee knew well before the Governor addressed his special communication to them; aye sir, they knew it before their Chairman drafted the resolutions introduced into this House, one of which so unblushingly asked this communication from His Excellency. This contemptible subterfuge I have before alluded to, and given it the character it deserves. Another resolution adopted in that room by the majority of the Committee *decrees* in substance that the enquiry into the *secrets, principles, objects and purposes* of this Know Nothing Party—the very enquiry they were ordered to make—“is an *insult* to the intelligence of a large majority of the people of Maryland through their representatives.” And another resolution *decrees* (for it will be observed they are all *decrees*) that it is unnecessary to have any persons or papers before them, because forsooth the *purity* of the principles, objects and purposes of their party are sufficiently vouched for by the fact of that party’s being represented by a majority on this floor. These *decrees* adopted in a committee room of the Maryland Legislature and not in the dark council of the order, are clearly, and I may say impudently in conflict with the resolutions of this House under which the Committee received their appointment. They positively and in defiance of this Honorable Body refuse to carry out the instructions they have received. We surely sir will not allow the majority of one of our own Committees to compromise our character and dignity, and then sanction the degradation by an approval of its course? No sir. This House intended, what they said. They intended an enquiry and investigation into the matter set forth in their resolutions, although they themselves were implicated. They had joined issue with the Governor of Maryland, and the tribunal they had selected for the trial, was public opinion, and the recording clerk of the court was to hold the pen of History. The fact of your being here as the representatives of a majority of the people with the attestation of your “*purity*” which such a fact affords, and even the fact of conscious innocence if it existed, were to be thrown aside in this trial. You yourselves demanded a trial upon the facts which should be thorough, and convincing to the whole world, now and forever. This House intended that, or it, *very solemnly* intended nothing. Such, sir, was their intention, or they have enacted a farce which would disgrace even Harlequin himself. They knew well that an appeal to public opinion cannot be met by the mere brute force of a majority voting this thing up or that thing down. They were well aware before they instituted

this enquiry that they had the power to stifle all investigation, but they also knew that such a course would create a suspicion of guilt rather than furnish proof of innocence. They knew, and now know, that they can enter a *nolle prosequi* to this prosecution, but they also know, that the bloodiest pirate that sweeps the ocean would do the same thing if he could, when brought before the bar of public justice to answer for his crimes—but he would be pirate still. History shows too plainly that such acquittals will not answer as pleas in bar, with public opinion. The earl Bothwell came forward for trial on the charge of murdering Darnley. Bothwell had a thousand men at arms within call. He was discharged, no one daring to appear as his accuser. But his name has come down through the pages of impartial history stained with murder and treason. A later case occurs to my mind. Aaron Burr was upon trial, actually acquitted of the charge of treason against his country. He lived a freeman from his trial to his grave; public opinion drew distinctions which the law cannot draw, and the fair fame he had previously won in the service of his country, withered before the blight, and his name has been branded with everlasting infamy. The intelligence of this House knew these things when they ordered this investigation, and it was ordered that public opinion should be satisfied upon the questions at issue. They intended not to avail themselves of the paltry pretexts and evasions suggested by the majority of the Committee in order to escape this investigation. They will not surely *thank* this Committee for attempting to place them in the inconsistent position of proposing this enquiry and of then retiring from the contest. It will surely meet your indignant frown that your Committee should assume that you can first act like the *blustering bully*, and will then retire like the *skulking coward*. What, sir, will this Honorable Body declare as the majority of this Committee have, that this enquiry instituted by themselves would be an insult to the majority of the people of this State? Will they thus shield themselves? Whence, sir, did this proposition for enquiry come? It was brought forward by the distinguished leader of the majority of this House, being also chairman of this Committee. Surely, that Honorable gentleman in offering it, did not intend to insult his dear constituents; and surely too the majority of this House knew whether or not it would be an insult to the majority of the people to have such an enquiry. And, sir, this lecture upon propriety and decorum comes with an ill grace indeed from this Committee. But the cruelty of imposing upon the Honorable gentleman, (Mr Kennedy) who inaugurated this enquiry, the task of declaring its insulting character is unparalleled in our political history. Shame! Shame! that the fond parent should be forced to acknowledge his bantering a bastard. It is to be hoped, that the *senatorial* cataplasm which has been since applied, will heal the wound which has been thus inflicted.

This House, Mr. Speaker, will not, if true to its character,

arrest this enquiry upon such a flimsy pretext so shamelessly brought forward; and sir, it will as promptly repudiate the idea also brought forward by this distinguished Committee, that we should not enquire into grievances and offences if countenanced by a majority of the people. The idea is absurd. This sir, is a Constitutional Government, and the majority may be as gross violators of law and right as ten men or one man and just as worthy of punishment. If a majority of the people of this State with Andrew Cross at their head were to blow up the Nunnery in Aisquith Street, or if they were to aid him in setting the *fire and the fagot* to a dozen *Popish Priests*, every man of them would be guilty of arson or murder, and if they were not hung it would not be because they did not deserve hanging. If this Legislature representing the entire people were unanimously to pass an act which would come in conflict with our Constitution, it is unnecessary for me to say that the act would have no validity. The majority can be guilty of treason itself; they may elect a first Consul or an Emperor, but none would deny their guilt in doing so; and, sir, I hope I may be excused if I state the plain truth, that there are many high intellects and conservative patriotic hearts in our land, who consider the majority in this House as guilty of treason to their country, and falsehood to their God, notwithstanding the "*purity of their principles*" are attested by the fact of their being the representatives of a majority of the people. I was in hopes that this enquiry if proceeded in, might relieve their minds at least from the apprehension of your being a gang of *secret* conspirators, even if it should be found that your *open and avowed* principles aimed a blow at the very foundation of our Institutions. Then, sir, let this enquiry proceed. Let the report be remanded with orders to obey instructions. Even if you can have the approval of your own consciences, do not disregard the approbation of those of your fellow-citizens whom nothing can satisfy but an investigation like the one you yourselves have proposed.

But, sir, what will you do with his Excellency the Governor? He will have a tremendous triumph over you if you now retire from this conflict. He has boldly pointed you out as very suspicious characters, and set the police upon your tracks. I fear you will be much annoyed—very uncomfortable indeed, if you cannot do something besides throwing yourselves upon your *dignity* and *reserved rights*, as many a criminal does when he is nabed. Avail yourselves then of the opportunity you have sought to prove yourselves worthy of better treatment. It is but blustering to abuse his Excellency, for he has but done his duty in the premises. Deserve a *retraxit* from him and you may claim the triumph. But, sir, if this House under the guidance of the Honorable Chairman of this Committee shall shamefully retire from the contest without striking an effectual blow, then the battle of *Actium* will be enacted again, and the modern *Anthony* will have succumbed before the superior arms of our *Augustus*.

Thus far and so much, for what the majority of this Committee have failed to do ; let us turn now to what they have actually done. They have presented here what is termed the Philadelphia platform of June 1855, as containing the true political principle of our country, and expect you by your vote here to give it your sanction and approval. That you should be gravely asked, sworn as you are to support the Constitution of the State and General Government, to endorse the offspring of that *Grand Council* is an insult which I could hope to see this House resent with proper spirit. I would not wish you to publish to the world in your *Legislative capacity*, with all the obligations you are under from your position here, your approval of the detestable principles it contains. If however they speak from authority—if you intend to confess in full to this black indictment then “beyond the infinite and boundless reach of mercy are you damned.” Why, sir, as I read this paper, I shudder. I have not a distempered imagination, but in my mind’s eye I can see the victim bound to the stake with the fire, the fagot and the bigot about him. I can see the rack and the torture ; I can see the assassins dagger and the warm hearts blood gushing from its wound ; I can see the poisoned chalice and its unsuspecting victim ; man’s intellect becomes dimmed with passion and bigotry and darkness again covers the world. These things, sir, have been from such cause and can be again. The first blood shed by man flowed from this cause, and the mark, as indelible as that fixed upon the front of Cain should be branded upon his brow, who like Cain would persecute his brother because he worships not at the same altar, or worships in a different manner from himself. I am, sir, a Protestant and a staunch one, but I sustain to the fullest extent the right of every man to differ from me, and mine to differ from him, in our religious creeds, and that too without molestation, hinderance or penalty of any kind to be written in a law or retained in the heart. But when I read this paper I hang my head for Protestantism. It is false to itself—it is disgraced. There is a dark spot upon its fair fame, and that darkness is made still more visible by the bright age we live in. It has allowed bigotry to become the captain of the Protestant forces, and they are furnished with the arms of the savage instead of the armour of truth. I repeat, sir, we have cause to hang our heads for Protestantism. Will you sustain the principles contained in this platform, and in the next breath denounce as traitors the Abolitionists—the Black Republicans? They are bad enough, God knows, but their principles are less fraught with danger to the happiness of our people than some on that paper. They, it is true, would liberate the black slave ; you would make the white one. They would sever our bright stars, and take their share to themselves, but you would darken the whole galaxy. They may succeed in dividing this Union ; you would make this Union not worth dividing. They shall keep their pestilent notions on the North side of a geographical line,

yours would be infused into the most intimate relations of life. You would loosen the sweet cords of hospitality which so strongly bind societies together. The Protestants and the Catholics become dis severed bodies and repel each other. How can any other effect result from the insulting course pursued and prescribed in this paper? Would you, sir, a Protestant Know Nothing associate with the Catholic whom you here denounce as a traitor? No, sir. And were I a Catholic, as I am a Protestant; no man who has ever united in such a denunciation, except as an object of mercy or charity, should ever cross the threshold of my dwelling. You thus place a gulph between neighbor and neighbor, which if passed at all will be passed for purposes of hatred and revenge. You would not stop here. You would infuse your poisonous atmosphere into the very domestic circle. The Protestant wife and Protestant offspring, who have lived in a happy union with their Catholic husband and father are now to be taught to dishonor him as a traitor and one unworthy of trust even under oath; and so adroitly have you combined this poison with another root of evil, that we shall behold the *Protestant* husband stepping over the pure honor of the *Catholic* wife of his bosom, to enjoy the debasing emoluments of office.

If you solemnly intend from your high position here to adopt and sanction the principles of this platform, don't complain that I have misconstrued them. For the sake of truth at least have the firmness to say that you intend, what you so explicitly declare—that this decree of this Council intended to insult Roman Catholics as a sect, and to proscribe the Roman Catholic as a man, there can be no doubt. If language is the sign of ideas, then the conclusion is inevitable. You will not select your victim from the opposing Protestant religious sects in order to arrest the "*aggressions*" or the "*corrupting tendencies*," of the Roman Catholics. If you intend to stop the dangers which, you declare, proceed from Catholicism you will know who to strike—the Catholic must be the victim. Such is not only the plain and simple declaration, attempted, it is true, to be somewhat mystified, but such is the construction deliberately given by the very framers of the platform themselves. For the sake of your characters as men, do not be guilty of the ineffable and contemptible duplicity of saying that it is not and was not designed to be an assault upon the Roman Catholic. Skulk not from this responsibility. Do not enjoy the wages of this sin and claim a reputation for the opposite virtue.

Such being the position of things how are we to account for the language on the 15th page of the majority report, that the Protestant and Catholic "*rightly understanding each other have every motive to be friends.*" Has there been any attempt to *enlighten* their understanding or any desire expressed to do so. If the scales which, the Chairman assumes, cover the eyes of the Catholics could have been removed, an enquiry, such

as was proposed by this House, might have tended to accomplish that object. Documents and witnesses would have been produced to elucidate the question and given the parties interested a "*right understanding*." Who has crushed this proceeding? The very gentleman who uses this insidious language. I will not characterise this sentence as it deserves. Possibly I cannot do it without overstepping the bounds of propriety.

But, sir, if by any possible delusion the 5th article of this Platform could escape from the just construction I have given it in regard to religious rights—the construction which its language clearly bears—the construction which the men who made it gave to it—you will not deny that it intends to proscribe our naturalized citizens individually and collectively. That it intends to deprive this class of our citizens, of privileges and rights, which in common with others they have heretofore enjoyed, and which it is considered are equally secured to all by the Constitution. When they have complied with the laws and have become naturalized, by the force of the term and by virtue of the Constitution and the laws made there under, they become invested with rights and privileges which to conspire to deprive them of merely because they belong to this class, would be as gross a violation of those rights and privileges, and of the Constitution which secures them, as would be a conspiracy on their part to effect that purpose in regard to the native born. The Constitution knows no distinction between the two classes, except where the distinction is made too clear for cavil. The native born, the foreign born, the Protestant and the Catholic citizens recline under the shadow of that great pyramid, all equally protected from the scorching rays of bigotry and persecution. Under that sacred charter which class or sect will you drive away first? Which is least entitled to remain there? no one will dare to say; and if no one will dare to say, how dare any to act? No matter how *intense your American feeling* may be whenever one class or sect shall combine to drive another from the protection of the Constitution or the full enjoyment of their well defined rights under it, such a course becomes a violation of that "obedience" to it, "*as the supreme law of the land sacredly obligatory upon all its parts and members.*" Parties based upon different constructions of the Constitution and upon the policy to be pursued under it, have always existed and were contemplated as a necessary concomitant of a free government, but parties formed of religious sects or of different classes of our citizens were in anticipation frowned upon by our glorious forefathers and can have no just existence under our Constitution. The course advised in this platform towards our foreign-born citizens, is not only a violation of the sacred charter of our rights but a dishonorable breach of that sacred pledge which our laws held out to them. Will you then do violence to all these *true American feelings*? Will neither

oaths or honor bind you? For purposes attempted to be, but not concealed, you can appeal to the "bright examples of patriots, statesmen and warriors of the Catholic faith whose names are associated with the glory of the past, and the gratitude of the present time," but the "glory of the past and the gratitude of the present time" in your keeping, cannot it seem, be meted out to those patriots, statesmen and warriors, who leaving their fatherland have given the energies of their minds and bodies and have poured out their hearts blood in defence of this their adopted home.

The idea of proscribing a whole class or sect of our citizens for the political opinions or conduct of individuals belonging to that class or sect is an injustice which could only sincerely enter and remain in the heart and mind of a fanatic—the political trickster will pursue that course for his selfish ends. In all justly governed countries individuals alone are held responsible for their conduct. Can I not believe from his professed principles that Brownson should not be entrusted with office under this Government, and yet be willing to entrust Judge Taney and others of the Catholic faith with its dearest rights? Could I not with propriety refuse to advance to office any naturalized citizen who should profess principles and pursue practices detrimental to our political system, and still consider it my duty to support one of the same class whom I believed to be faithful to the Constitution, and correct in his political principles? These propositions are too plain for discussion—they are perfectly in accordance with the Constitution—and yet, sir, the declarations in this Platform which you are called upon to adopt rejects these self-evident propositions. The Constitution frowns indignantly upon these distinctions between classes and sects; this Platform creates them, and we fear may perpetuate them.

But, sir, how grossly inconsistent would the adoption of this Platform make every member of the majority of this House. Previously to 1853 they were enrolled as members of either the Democratic or Whig Party. When did any one of you as a Whig or a Democrat profess the detestable principles which I have adverted to? Never! It was not in 1840 when the Whig Central Committee nobly rebuked the sentiments contained in this Philadelphia Platform, and advanced as the true principles of our Government, the sentiments and views I have to day advocated. It was not when Gustav W. Lurman, a naturalized citizen, and Nathaniel F. Williams, Wm. Chesnut, and John P. Kennedy, all native born, could set at the same political board and entertain the same political principles. Let us go to these fathers of the State for their counsel. I read it sir, for the instruction of this House and the people. "In this country every man is permitted to worship his Maker as his conscience may approve. Our laws

and Constitutions were framed to secure to all this glorious privilege. The native and naturalized citizens are equally entitled to the blessings of our Government: all are equal and when a stranger takes up his abode here, and has remained among us during the time prescribed by the naturalization laws, he has a right to become a citizen and will be entitled to the privileges of citizenship." When they published these noble sentiments, as a rebuke to an expression of sentiments of an opposite character, they called upon the Whigs of Maryland to endorse them and the Whigs of Maryland did endorse them. Have any of those signers of that address renounced those principles? If they have, let us know them and detest them—and if any of those who battled then for those principles shall now solemnly record their votes against them, let the record be preserved, and at some future, but not distant day, they will receive their due reward.

But, sir, to come down from 1810 to 1852. Can any member of either of those old parties here present deny that he and his party acted upon these pure principles which were always advocated by both, and which I have feebly advocated here to day? The proscription of either naturalized citizens or Roman Catholics would then have been justly abhorrent to you all and you would all have actively combined against the man or party who should have proposed it. You Whigs of 1852 circulated from one end of this land to the other that intolerant New Hampshire ought not to have the honor of furnishing a President. You Democrats successfully responded that New Hampshire, though tainted with sin, like Nazareth of old could send forth one who was true to his duty as a man and faithful to his country as a citizen. That man was FRANKLIN PIERCE—a name which it is refreshing to breathe in the midst of the intolerable stench which rises from the Philadelphia Pandemonium—a name which the people will ever honor as synonymous with patriotism in spite of the contemptible efforts of the vermin race of politicians to defame it—the charge then that New Hampshire was intolerant and the defence that Franklin Pierce was an open, avowed and active friend of religious toleration, proved that you all united in favor of that great principle. Was there any avowal of your determination to cut off and proscribe our naturalized fellow-citizens in their rights and privileges? none! and the man or the party who would have announced such a design would have met the just and indignant rebuke of you all. Will you then in so short a space of time be inconsistent with yourselves upon questions, in regard to which common sense, truth, justice and patriotism can give but one answer and that diametrically opposite to the perilous doctrine taught in this Platform?

But, sir, the work of these Philadelphia conspirators would not have been complete without they could have introduced the Holy Bible as a cloak for their hypocrisy, and call upon the Almighty

Father as a witness of their wickedness. How dare they to expect to deceive mankind by holding in one hand that Holy Book, the true source of love and benevolence to our race, and yet hold in the other the 5th article of this platform teaching that the poor are to be avoided and despised—that *poverty* is inconsistent with *honesty*—and that the *pauper* stands upon the same level with the *felon*? That article it is true is dictated by the desire to exclude the poor of Europe, but its language is insulting to the poor everywhere. Let us analyze it. To use its own language, it “unqualifiedly condemns” the emigration of the poor to our shores, but offers “a friendly reception and protection” to the *honest* emigrant. Cannot the *poor* be honest? It offers an asylum in this country to those who seek it, from “love of liberty and hatred of oppression.” Cannot the poor love liberty and hate oppression? But when and where did these Bible reading men obtain their authority or discover the propriety of discriminating against the poor? Not from the institutions of our country, nor from the book of God, but from the depravity of their own hearts. Can they discover any word or sentence in the Holy Code which they insist shall be a school book for the length and breadth of this land, that instructs them to discard the poor? Not one! But if there are any who are treated as the special favorites of God, and whom he orders man to protect and sustain under the penalty of losing his favor, they are this class of our fellow beings. His promises and denunciations abound in regard to this matter—the former for those who will relieve the miseries and soothe the sorrows of the poor and distressed, the latter for those who shall shut their ears to their cries. “He who considereth the poor the Lord will remember him in the days of his trouble.” “Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.”

If, sir, the curse of God is thus denounced upon the individual who shall turn his back upon the poor, what will be the fate of this great nation upon which he has showered his blessings if it shall have its councils darkened by such false teachers? He the great God makes this land to overflow with his munificent bounties. He loads our tables with luxuries which *Dives* himself knew not of; shall we even worse than *Dives*, refuse to the poor of the world the very crumbs which fall from these tables. God forbid that our country should thus call down the scathing of his wrath. Let us then repudiate these heathen teachers. It is plain that their principles will not stand the test of the Holy Book, and they acted not unwisely when in their new Platform, they relieved it from their contamination. I trust that before the next grand council assembles they will see the folly of being guilty of the double crime of committing sins which make the “angels weep and of calling on the Almighty, as it were, to endorse them.”



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 006 043 316 1