

bidding! This ballot (taking it out and looking at it, he might say to himself,) was once in my hands an evidence and instrument of sovereignty, the guardian of my rights, and the creature of my will; what is it now? A tool of bondage, to be used subserviently, not to advance my own will and wishes, but to subserve the contrary will and wishes of others! This is but a fancy sketch, but it may be nearer to a true picture than many an original will admit.

A word now upon the clause in the obligation of the *third degree*, which as quoted, is in these words: "*That you (the member) will support for all political offices, third or union degree members of this order in preference to all others.*" What does this mean? Are there kings, lords and commons in this society? First, second and third degree, and the solemn pledge here to support for all *political offices*, members of the *third degree* in preference to all others. What! are men to be supported in America for office according to *rank*? It has been thought that merit was the only true standard by which candidates for political offices and honors should be measured in this Republic, and there is a clause in the Constitution of the United States which forbids the granting of any title of nobility. It sounds very much like an order of nobility to hear talk of men of the third degree of an order to be supported for all political offices in preference to all others!! How far such a provision comports with the feelings or interests of the substratum of the society, the members of the first and second degrees, it is not in the power of this minority to say. They therefore leave it to themselves. But they are free to declare, that they consider it repugnant to the nature and genius of American institutions, Constitutions and laws, and to the *fundamental* principles of *all free* government to have established amongst them any class or order of men, who claim, or have conceded to them the right, by virtue of any obligation resting upon any considerable portion of the people to that effect or otherwise, to be *supported for all political offices in PREFERENCE TO ALL OTHERS!* From all which, this minority conclude and say, in answer to the second branch of inquiry, that according to the evidence before them, they are of the opinion that there has existed, and does exist, in Maryland and many other States of this Union, an organized political society, which encourages and pursues principles and purposes which tend to the subversion of the well established and deeply-cherished principles of our Government, and that party is known and distinguished by the name of the *Know-Nothing Society or Order*, sometimes assuming the name of American Party.