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Sommario/riassunto	By the mid nineteenth century, anti-Catholicism had become a central conflict in America. Fueling the dissent were Protestant groups dedicated to maintaining what they understood to be the Christian vision and spirit of the "founding fathers." Afraid of the religious and moral impact of Catholics, they advocated for stricter laws in order to maintain the Protestant predominance of America. Of particular concern to some of these native-born citizens, or "nativists," were Roman Catholic immigrants whose increasing presence and perceived allegiance to the pope alarmed them. The Na