TILLMAN'S SPEECH

DELIVERED IN UNITED STATES SENATE MONDAY

SEES NATIONS DECAY

Senior Senator Scores Woman Suffrage—Says Country Needs Good Mothers More Than Purifiers of Politics—Touches on Divorce Evil and Caminetti-Diggs Case.

For the first time since the illness which almost caused his death, Senator Tillman Monday delivered a real speech in the Senate in open session. There was a good attendance on the floor and in the galleries. The subject of the speech and vigorous manner in its delivery (although the Senator read from the manuscript which he had previously dictated) interested the audience greatly and constituted a welcome diversion from the tedium of the tariff debate. Comment in Washington was that the speech sounded exactly like the Tillman of old.

While Senator Tillman was explaining South Carolina's attitude towards divorce in contrast with that of her neighbors, Senator Overman, of North Carolina, interrupted to explain that the previous looseness of the divorce law in his State has been corrected. Senator Bacon undertook to make a statement with reference to Georgia, whereupon Senator Tillman down, remarking that he would let Mr. Bacon make the speech. This sarcasm had its effect in checking interruption and Senator Tillman resumed the thread of his fiery discourse, which was in full as follows:

Mr. President: A few days ago I asked permission of the Senate to insert in the Record and to have printed as a public document an article entitled "The Mission of Woman," by Dr. Alfred Taylor Bledsoe. When the Record appeared the next morning it was found that the article in question contained what many Senator thought was an unkind and unjust reference to Northern women. I had not read the entire article before submitting it to the Senate. I had read only the first part, and was struck by the force of the historical references quoted in it as to the cause of the decay and fall of Rome. I felt that the article was very opportune just at this time, and that was why I wanted it given circulation in the Record and printed as a public document. On discovering the attitude of my brother Senators toward it, which I can readily see was natural if not justifiable, I promptly joined them in requesting that it be expunged from the Record. I wished to avoid even the appearance of harboring mean thought or uncharitable sentiments toward the women of the North. Some of the very finest women I have ever known were Northern women and good women, thank God, are not confined to any section of our great country. They are to be found everywhere in the United States, and they will be the greatest factors in saving our civilization from degeneration and destruction.

The expunging of the article from the Record did not prevent its reaching every part of the United States, for the copies containing it had been mailed before the action of the Senate ordering it to be expunged and countermanding the order for it to be printed as a public document had been taken.

Comments more or less vitriolic, and some of them wholly unjust and unfair, have come to me through the mail. I have been astounded to see how much ignorance has been shown. Some of the most scholarly Northern magazines and periodicals, like the Independent, whose editors ought to be ashamed of their ignorance, discuss "The Mission of Woman" as though it had just appeared, instead of having been published forty odd years ago. I have received a number of requests for copies of "The Mission of Woman"; and I am sorry that the Senate refused to have it printed as a public document, because the action of the Senate expunging it from the permanent Record only attracted attention to it more and caused people to be curious to see what had stirred up all the row in Washington.

Further Explanation.

I have investigated the matter fully, and feel that in justice both to Dr. Bledsoe and to myself I ought to make a further statement. He was a profound scholar, a courteous gentleman and a Godly man; and I feel that it is due his memory to explain fully how the article came to be written, and under what circumstances it was given publicity. Dr. Bledsoe died in 1877. So nothing that has been, or will be, said about "The Mission of Woman" here or elsewhere, will affect him in the slightest. He has gone, "somewhere past the sunset and the night," to a land where wordly praises can not please nor worldly censures wound or crush. But I want to clear his memory and his name from any suspicion of sectional narrowness of any kind, and above all of narrowness and bigotry towards the women of any part of our common country. A chief tenet of the school in which he was reared was chivalrous respect and reverence for women, and to him a good woman, wherever and under whatever circumstances she might live, was a superior being, a sort of divinity whose high and holy purpose on earth was to bear, to rear and to mould man into the image of his Maker. In sadness, not in anger, he saw, or thought he saw, Northern women surrendering their divinity and high privileges for mere human rights, and as an honest man, true to the training he had received from his own mother and to the ideals which that training had engendered, he kindly, but firmly, spoke his sentiments.

The article first appeared in print in 1871, in the October number of the Southern Review, one of the the broadest and most scholarly periodicals of its day. It was the lineal descendant of the once famous De-Bow's Review. From 1846 until the close of the civil war this later magazine was a leading exponent of the hopes and aspirations of the South; and when it, mortally wounded, as it were, by the collapse and fall of the Southern Confederacy, suspended publication shortly after the end of the war, the Southern Review was founded to take its place. Dr. Bledsoe was chosen editor of the new periodical, and it was his review of the then new published "History of Morals," by Lecky, which led him to write "The Mission of Woman". The last chapter of Lecky's history is a very brilliant and profound exposition of the condition, social rights and political privileges of women in all ages. The criticism as it appeared in the Southern Review had been reprinted in pamphlet form by some admirer of Dr. Bledsoe; and Senator Johnson, of Alabama, (now, alas! gone from us to his long resting place,) and had come into possesion of a copy. He showed it to me and asked me to have it printed as a public document. I glanced through it hurriedly and was so forcibly impressed by the author's apt application of Lecky's facts to the question of woman suffrage, divorce, and materialism, now so apparent everywhere, that I asked to have it printed in the Record as well as a public document, for I thought it could not be given too wide publicity because the country needs educating along these lines more than any other just at this time.

Day of the Carpetbagger.

But Lecky's History was only the occasion of "The Mission of Woman". The real reason for its being written was undoubtedly the deplorable condition of Southern politics at that time. As Senators will remember, the reconstruction of the South was completed in 1868. Universal suffrage had been decreed by Congress, and men with Federal uniforms on their backs and rifles in their hands marshalled the newly freed blacks to the polls, and treated how they should cast their ballots. Thus, under the leadership of Thad Stevens and others the Northern fanatics sowed the seed, and by 1871 the harvest of evils began to ripen. The South, prostrate and bleeding at every pore, her past a hopeless memory of better times, her present a slough of despond, and her future a hideous nightmare, the South, I say, was literally wallowing in violence, corruption, honesty and political debauchery. It was pitiful. The great South, "than which no fairer land hath fired a poet's lay" was become a loathsome region full of hideous sights and sounds and things unholy. Negroes, very few of whom could read or write, and some of them not three generations removed from the jungles of Africa controlled our Legislatures, while white scoundrels and thieves from the North ruled the negroes and robbed our people through them. Many of the magistrates and judges were negroes. The States colleges and universities of the South, maintained by taxation, were controlled by trustees elected by the negro Legislatures. Carpet baggers, scalawags, and negroes were among these trustees, and Dr. Bledsoe and other Southerners like him were ready to cry out: "Icabod, thy glory has departed forever."

At the thought of women anywhere, especially of the South, entering this monstrous and filthy arena, Dr. Bledsoe's chivalrous, sensitive spirit recoiled with horror. He pointed to the women of the North not for what they were, but for what they might become, and would become, and would become if they persisted in their determination to abandon the sphere in which God had placed them. He lifted the kindly finger of warning; he drew the knightly sword of protection; he did not level the brutal pike of censure and condemnation. His scholarly mind appreciated the cause of the rottenness of imperial Rome, and believing that history repeats itself, he trembled for his country. I know from experience how hard it is for old men to adopt new notions, to accept new ideals. Visions are for young men; old men must "dream dreams", and cling to their traditions. They dislike to be rudely awakened, and are ever holding back against innovations and changes. The world moves forwards, ever forward, because the young men will seek to progress. It is the ideal civilization or condition in society when the two forces are equalized, and the young and progressive visionaries are counselled and directed and held back by the wisdom of their seniors. Old men see the world rushing along pell-mell, helter-skelter, going to the devil, so to speak, we mourn in spirit "The old order changeth, yielding place to the new," and the transitions are so startling that they hurt us cruelly.

Tackles Suffrage Issue.

I am led to make a few remarks on woman suffrage, although it is a dangerous topic to handle just at this time. I flatter myself, however, that my well-known reverence for good women will shield me from being misunderstood. The idea is fast becoming a practical issue, and Senators will realize the importance of our obtaining as much accurate information in regard to it as the nature of the subject will permit. Much value data could be obtained in States where the experiment is now being tried. Vital statistics should by all means be gathered in those States where woman suffrage already obtains. We ought to have records made of the birth rate, death rate, divorces and other things affecting the every-day social life of the people, which would in a hundred years, say, show us whether female suffrage has affected these things injuriously or not.

In Rome, when the manner and customs with regard to women began to change and they were given more privileges than they had ever enjoyed before, divorces were so largely increased that free love became the rule—the birth rate correspondingly decreased, at Lecky's History shows. Now it is a beautiful dream that female suffrage will purify politics, because our ideals of women are so high, and we regard them so absolutely as the sources of goodness and purity, that we can not conceive of their not elevating and helping anything they touch. But the vital and important thing for us to consider is the effect on women themselves. We had better endure the evils of corruption in politics and debauchery in our government rather than brow about a condition which will mar the beauty and dim the luster of the glorious womanhood with which we have become accustomed all of our lives. We can better afford to have degraded and corrupt politics than degraded and bad women. To have both in ever-increasing degree, as was in case in Rome, would make the world so unspeakably horrible as well as so corrupt that good men and women both would disappear from the face of the earth, and Satan would be hurled out [illegible] Indeed I am [illegible] expect to the [illegible] that [illegible] matter of being de[illegible] that I shiver to think of the [illegible] to the washboard of [illegible] suffrage [illegible] taking [illegible] votes and all races. Yet the experiment is going to be tried, I fear.

The Ballot a Privilege.

I know the the demand for suffrage on the part of women is growing too fast for old fogies like me to stop it, except possibly in the South and New England, where conservatism is more strongly intrenched than anywhere else in this country. I believe religiously that whatever the women ask for the men will give them, even though it be to their ultimate injury, and the country will have to rest and be tested along these lines in spite of all the theories and ideals which have governed us heretofore. Fortunately the United States Supreme Court has declared that casting the ballot is a privilege, not a right, and that the States alone can confer this right on its citizens.

Neither the suffragettes nor the suffragettors, as Representative Heflin calls their masculine sympathizers, ever consider or seem to pay and regard to the effect of politics on women, but I sincerely believe that the usefulness and goodness of woman vary inversely as the extent of her participation in politics. I believe she will improve politics, but, ultimately, politics will destroy her as we know her and love her; and when our good women are no longer to be found, and we have lost the breed, the doom of the Republic is near.

It may be contended that information such as I have described would be partial and fragmentary, and that any conclusions based on it would, therefore, contain a large factor of uncertainty. That may or may not be true. But there is at least one subject about which mathematically exact knowledge can be obtained. The number of divorces granted in a State with woman suffrage and the birth rate may be compared with the number in the same State before equal suffrage was adopted, and the relation between the two phenomena inferred.

I thank God that my lot was cast in a State where there is no such thing as divorce. To get married in South Carolina is the easiest thing imaginable. To get "unmarried" is impossible. "Once married, always married," is the rule. Literally and exactly we believe that "for better or for worse, in poverty and in wealth, in sickness and in health, till death do them part," they twain are one.

It is true that, if life together becomes unbearable, a man and wife may separate and live apart; but even then the bonds that bind them are only stretched, not legally broken. In South Carolina we tie a matrimonial knot that baffles alike the skill of legal logic, the dexterity of sophistry, the nimble fingers of a false expediency and the brute strength of a statute. The knot we tie holds faster than the fabled "Gordian Knot" of antiquity. Ingenuity can not unfasten nor force destroy it. The skeleton fingers of death alone can loose it.

Not the South Carolina Way.

We in South Carolina do not believe in the modern idea so prevalent in this day and time of permitting a man to marry a woman in her youth and beauty, and then, when her neck begins to grow skinny and shrunken, her face sallow and splotched, and her eyes dim, to search out among his women acquaintances some young and buxom girl who suits his lustful eyes better and straightway set to work systematically to treat his old wife so that she, in self-defence and to maintain her self-respect, seeks a divorce to get rid of him. There have been glaring cases of this kind of world-wide notoriety wherever the divorce evil flourishes.

When we contrast this type of man and woman with the glorious picture drawn by Burns, these men who have souls are bound to recoil from the one type and bow down and worship the other. Lest you have forgotten the verses I will recite them for you:

"John Anderson, my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonie brow was brent;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snaw,
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson, my jo.

"John Anderson, my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither,
And mony a canty day, John,
We've had wi'an another.
Now we maun totter down, John,
And hand in hand we'll go
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo."

This song, one of Robert Burns' best is the very apotheosis of married love among the virtuous and good people of the world.

In thinking also of the widespread and progressive character of the divorce evil like all thoughtful men I have been led to consider the cause of it and the great demoralization which has followed it. The law of sexuality is the most powerful law in nature and it is the wise provision of the good God who created us with it [illegible] reproduction the purpose [illegible] Wherever the marriage [illegible] a sacred [illegible] as a sacred [illegible] women a mere [illegible] with [illegible] just as good [illegible] brave and noble men. As long as [illegible] a man [illegible] the Romans [illegible] all their neighbors and a [illegible] nations of Europe. When the [illegible] grew to be loose in their virtue and lost it altogether in many cases and the women to be of the type of Nero's mother who commanded to cut with her own sword as the historians tell us Rome rapidly decayed and ceased to be mistress of the world. Therefore it can be safely claimed that civilization [illegible] dependent on good women and by good women I do not mean only amiable women. I mean virtuous women.

This State Unique.

The divorce evil does not directly affect South Carolina. For our State is the only one that does not permit divorce in some form. North Carolina and Georgia, States on our borders, both grant them and on as cruel as trivial grounds as report be true. My State is a lonely island surrounded by a turbulent flood of raging, maddened waters and lest we too be submerged, I would see the waters subside and the dry land appear and under the blessed rays of God's moral sunshine would behold once again over our whole country the fruits and flowers of domestic peace, love and affection, confidence, joy and contentment.

I beg Senators' pardon for having digressed. But as I was going on to say, statistics on the number of divorces granted in States where women have the vote would be very valuable. It would enable us to see the connection between woman suffrage and family life. It appears to me that the relation between "votes for women" and divorce, if not one of cause and effect, is at least one of mutual acceleration. I am no pessimist; but I am enough of a scientist to accept the truth wherever I find it, be it pleasant or unpleasant, and I have read history to no purpose if it has not taught me that the purity and stability of the family has in all age been the surest bulwark of the State. It has ever been that when the marriage relation became insecure, and women quitted their own sphere to enter that of man, the decay and fall of States followed. So often has this happened that I must believe that the one set of events is the result of the other. I have, therefore, sounded this feeble note of worning. As Hannibal gazed mournfully on the bloody head of his brother, Hasdrubal, and prophetically exclaimed, "Carthage, I see thy fate," so I, looking at the growing craze of woman suffrage and the rapid in- in number of divorces granted in this country, sadly think, if I do not say, "America, thy race is almost run unless something is done to check thy headlong speed."

The demoralization and consequent degradation which has been produced by the divorce evil, are illustrated by the notorious Diggs Caminetti affair in California. The ease with which divorces are obtained in Reno led to that place being selected as the one to carry the two respectable girls from Sacramento, and the promise to marry these women after divorces were obtained no doubt had much to do with overcoming their scruples. Such a tragedy in domestic life could not happen at all in South Carolina. It could not happen anywhere in the South, even in those States where divorces are obtained, and I say it in no boasting spirit.

Northern View of Us.

We have bad women in South Carolina and through the South. But the habits of our people and their customs, inherited from our forefathers, all make it dangerous to "monkey with men's womenkind". Some Northern people call us barbarians because we shoot the seducer and lynch the rapist. If the California men had our customs, Diggs and Caminetti would not be alive now, because they would have been shot like dogs, and the fathers of the girls they have ruined would be acquitted almost without the jury leaving the box. The unwritten law, as it has been called, is the best law to protect woman's virtue that I ever heard of, though there have been abuses of it and men at times have gone scot-free who ought to have been punished. The more I think about the Diggs-Caminetti case, the more outraged I grow at the state of morals and society which not only permits such crimes against civilization, but encourages them. I am too much of a savage myself to think upon such things with calmness and equanimity. However, this case is now being tried, and, perhaps, I ought not to comment on it. But I am speaking as I do not for the purpose of influencing the jury, or public opinion for or against the men who are indicted. I am only using the case to illustrate the argument I am making on the demoralization of society wrought by woman suffrage and easy divorces.

Among our very rich people in America degeneration and bestiality have gone so far that swapping wives is a common practice. Family life is no longer what it ought to be and the watering places and hotels resorts in the mountains afford opportunities for getting a married woman [illegible] husbands. [illegible] of a debauchee and scoundrel he may be, is shared up by the father and purchased in the open market just as he would purchase a new race or a stallion. The woman becomes a legal prostitute for a time. Then the titled debauchee whose relatives have sacrificed at the polluted altar along are relieved of her presence. A divorce follows and the contracting alliance between money and scoundrelism is ended. Oh! the shame of it. But that is the way in which society is progressing. God save the mark!

To me such people seem to be as straight to hell and I am no stickler for religion. I look upon from the bottom of my soul this degradation and brutishness as becoming too common in society.

Warns Against Weakness.

The danger of doing away there be in giving women the ballot at all is increased by the cowardice of public men everywhere. Politicians the world over have always had a keen eye to see which way they think the people are going; and it seems to me that the men politicians are trying to make peace with the women politicians and get on their good side while it is fair weather. I noticed in Saturday's paper that the headlines threatened dire consequences hereafter to any public man who dared oppose the demand for woman suffrage now. I am afraid some of the weak-kneed men will be influenced in their attitude on this momentous subject by this fear. No man, who is a man worth standing in shoe leather, will be influenced by any such motive, and only cowards will yield their convictions and vote to give the women the ballot unless they believe honestly that it is for the best interests of the women and of the country. The history of the world is full of "crazes", or what they now call obsessions. The crusades are an illustration of what I mean.

Peter, the Hermit, a fanatical monk who was very eloquent, aroused the religious fervor of the Christians in Western Europe to such a pitch that hundreds of thousands enlisted for the Holy War against the Infidels. No doubt this fervor was necessary to prevent the Crescent from supplanting the Cross. It was like two storms coming from opposite directions and meeting. The Saracens overran Egypt and Northern Africa, and crossed the Strait of Gibraltar into Spain. They crossed Spain and invaded France, and were only beaten back by Charles Martel, who defeated them at the battle of the tours. It was six centuries before the Moors were expelled from the Spanish Peninsula and compelled to return to Africa.

Later when the Turks had conquered Constantinople the followers of the Crescent overran Southeastern Europe up to the walls of Vienna, where the rising tide of Mohammedanism was only stopped by John Sobieski.

The recent war in the Balkans has wrested almost all of that peninsula from the Turks, but here was so little Christianity, patriotism and sense among the allied nationalities that racial and religious prejudice and hatreds brought on a patricidal strife among themselves.

Children's Lives Sacrificed.

In one of the crusades the children were crazed by the priests and tens of thousands of them gathered and began to march towards the East. What they could do after they got there never seemed to enter their minds at all. They were simply lunatics frenzied with the religious idea.

First and last, historians tell us that upwards of one million, one hundred thousand people perished. The pitiful story is told that five shiploads of these children who started for Palestine were sold into slavery to the infidels by their so-called Christian leaders. The rest of the children died from exposure and starvation.

It may not be worth while to recall these things, and I only mention them for the purpose of directing attention to the dangerous forces which are being set in motion by those who are preaching and agitating for woman's rights.

I am aware that in recalling all these horrid and cruel things I am charged to with making a serious [illegible] of the [illegible] of our [illegible] Therefore there may [illegible] appearance of [illegible] at all. I may [illegible] for giving way to [illegible] makings [illegible] seems to me [illegible] real [illegible] weak [illegible] and [illegible] as I have always [illegible] having been taught by my mother [illegible] to try and to think everything [illegible] and [illegible] better [illegible] and purity and if ever she [illegible] stops [illegible] and purity and [illegible] home [illegible] the [illegible] earth [illegible] home and [illegible] purity and [illegible] [illegible] fast where every [illegible] are [illegible] women are [illegible] husbands [illegible] of a debauchee and scoundrel he may be, is shared up by the father and purchased in the open market just as he would purchase a new race or a stallion. The woman becomes a legal prostitute for a time. Then the titled debauchee whose relatives have sacrificed at the polluted altar along are relieved of her presence. A divorce follows and the contracting alliance between money and scoundrelism is ended. Oh! the shame of it. But that is the way in which society is progressing. God save the mark!

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BRUTE KILLS WIFE

Who Was on Her Knees Pleading for Mercy.

While on her knees pleading for [illegible] Mrs. Ella Denson, of Key West, was struck to the death on the streets of Jacksonville, Fla., Friday by her husband, Denson. Two negroes who were witnesses to the tragedy were afraid to interfere.

[illegible] and Mrs. [illegible] from Key West several weeks ago, [illegible] for working in a restaurant on Franklin street. It is said that he threatened to kill her if she did not return with him. When Mrs. Denson started home her husband was waiting just outside the door, and started after her. She outran him three blocks, but fell on her knees exhausted. Denson rushed up and without a word, fired two shots, either of which would have been fatal, physicians say. Denson has not been capture.

Negro Kills Georgia Man.

J. C. Marchmon, a farmer, was shot and killed at Greenville, Ga., Wednesday by Falter Brewster, a negro, whom Marchman was bringing to Greenville for trial on a trivial charge. Brewster jumped from Marchmon's buggy, rushed into a negro's house by the roadside and procured a shotgun. He chased Marchmon around the house for several minutes finally killing him.

Train Hits Auto.

Karl F. Taylor was killed near Newton, N. C., Wednesday when a train hit his automobile, in which he had attempted to get across the track. Mr. Taylor was coming home from Blowing Rock in a small car. Witnesses say that he was not racing, but had curtains and windshield up. He was struck and hurled thirty feet upon a pile of crossties and had his skull crushed.

Kills Wife at Breakfast.

Frantic because he had heard unfounded reports reflecting on his wife's character, John Marshall Wednesday morning fired five bullets into her body as they sat at the breakfast table in their home at Martin's Ferry, across the Ohio River from Wheeling, W. Va.