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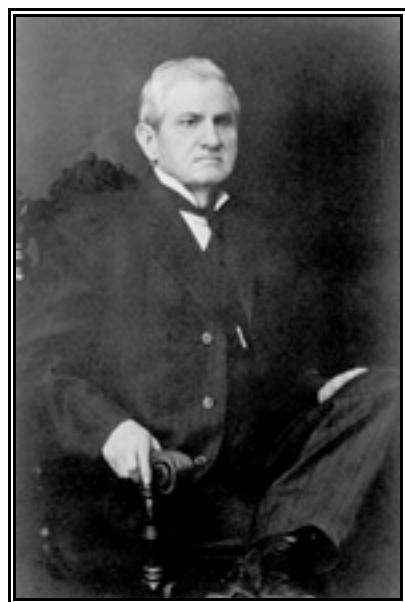
ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

A SCRAWNY CROMWELL.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Senate, the Washington dispatches announce, decided in secret session to expunge from the *Record* the speech made by Senator Tillman on the 21st instant in which he took the inventory of his fellow Senators, “paid his respects” to each, as he passed them in review, and characterized Spooner of Wisconsin as “the burnt-cork artist of the Senate”; designated Foraker of Ohio as



Benjamin Ryan Tillman
(1847-1918)

“Fire-Alarm Joe”; referred to Culberson of Texas as the “solo performer on bones”; ridiculed Daniel as “the brilliant and courtly Senator from Virginia, whose specialty is oratory, and who works his rhetoric overtime”; dropped coals of fire on Patterson, defeated for re-election by the Legislature of his State, as “the dying swan, smiling Tom of Colorado”; stigmatized Carmack of Tennessee as “a very Hotspur, unhorsed and with spear-head broken off”; scoffed at Lodge of Massachusetts as “the negro preacher and telephone artist in the show, who on occasion gets in communication with the White House over the wire and acts as a receiver and repeater, a very chameleon in his accuracy in reproducing White

House colors”; slurred Clay of Georgia as “the pompadour artist, who depends upon his voice to carry conviction to his audience”; derided Stone as “Gumshoe Bill from Old Missouri whose greatest feat is walking on eggs without breaking the shells”; and so forth.

Not a crack from the whip of Tillman’s tongue but was true. And yet—!

One day, in the year 1658, Oliver Cromwell stepped, booted and spurred, into the House and Commons; he also “took the inventory” of the occupants, as he chased them

out one by one; and, addressing them collectively uttered these memorable sentences:

“It is high time for me to put an end to your sitting in this place which ye have dishonored by your contempt of all virtue, and defiled by your practice of vice. Ye are a factious crew, and the enemies to all good government. Ye are a pack of mercenary wretches, and would, like Esau, sell your country for a mess of potage; and, like Judas, betray your God for a few pieces of money. Is there any virtue now remaining among ye? Is there one vice ye do not possess? Ye have no more religion than any horse. Gold is your god. Which of ye have not bartered away your conscience for bribes?

“Is there a man among ye that has the least care for the good of the commonwealth? Ye sordid prostitutes!

“Have ye not defiled this sacred place and turned the Lord’s Temple into a den of thieves? By your immoral principles and your wicked practices ye are grown intolerably odious to the whole nation.

“Ye who were deputed here by the people to get their grievances redressed are become their greatest grievance.

“Your country, therefore, calls upon me to cleanse this Augean stable by putting a final period to your iniquitous proceedings in this House, and which by God’s help and strength he hath given me, I have now come to do. I command ye, therefore, upon peril of your lives, to depart immediately out of this. Go! Get ye out! Make haste!

“Ye venal slaves, begone! Take away that shining bauble there, and lock up the door!”

So spake Cromwell—ininitely more to the point than his scrawny would-be and only partial imitator from South Carolina. Unfortunately for Tillman his performance approaches that of Oliver just enough to recall the latter, and, by recalling it, contrast it with his own.

Tillman is only a forerunner. The Cromwell of this generation is being forged in the burning furnace of the revolution of this generation. When that Cromwell will have come forward, when he, addressing the capitalist politicians of the day, will hurl at them the indictment—“Ye who were deputed here by the people to get their grievances redressed are become their greatest grievance”—then, not merely the butts of the Tillmans, but the Tillmans, along with the rest of the vermin, will be thrown out of doors.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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