

"Instead of advocating a law to make divorce easier I would beg you to abolish altogether the granting of divorces by parliament. Let Watha keep the reputation she has made for upholding the honor of the home. Let my people not lose faith in you.

"For you, white men, are the chosen people. Christ revealed Himself early to you, and you have a sublime past of chronicled martyrs, heroes and saints up to which you must live.

"My people sat in darkness. You gave us the light. You taught us the glory of the Infinite Being, whose great Father-heart knows no distinction of race or color, and we still look to you for guidance.

"The precepts most profoundly impressed upon my people since your advent here have been these: Love your enemies, and put not away the wife of your youth. Your missionaries would cheerfully have given their lives to uphold these teachings. Tonight we are asked to repudiate one of them.

My Iroquois forefathers were a hardy and chaste, if primitive, race. Even they did not in their councils, permit divorce without what they considered sufficient cause. Yet you are asked here tonight to legalize in the highest tribunal of the land the customs of our pre-civilized days, in which stage men are pleased to describe us as savages."

The burst of applause that marked this point was almost instantly hushed, as Aniatariio continued his speech with more feeling than he had yet shown.

"If every member present tonight could see the spirit of his mother beside him as he rises to declare his vote, and if he would be guided by her wishes, I know that not one vote would be recorded in favor of this bill. . . . Yet surely I have not to plead with you to protect the rights of the wives and children of your people. It can not be that the descendant of a race so lately pagan has to remind you.