

THE PURCELL REGISTER

Purcell, Chickasaw Nation, I. T.,
Friday, October 6, 1893
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EDITORIAL ON CHOCTAW COUNCIL

Tuskahoma, I. T.,

Oct. 2.

This was the day of the convening of the Choctaw council in regular session. It was expected that every member of both the senate and house would be present and that there would be an unusually full attendance of citizens, but in both instances there was something of a disappointment. There were nine of the twelve senators present and twelve of the twenty representatives. There were many citizens present, but not so many as expected, the rains of last night and a day or two previous put all the rivers and creeks on a rampage and the people from the back counties who delayed starting until the last moment are water-bound, but they will come as soon as possible.

There is a peculiar and unusual interest in this session of the council. Many believe that its action will seal the fate of the Choctaw nation for weal or for woe. All seem impressed

with the gravity of the situation. They realize that wise counsel must prevail if their autonomy is preserved. This spirit prevails among both factions. To-day men meet and discuss the situation who were arrayed in arms against each other and seeking to wipe out personal and political differences in blood.

Unlike it has been at the opening of former sessions of the council all are sober and there is no boasting of former powers or present prestige, but for all this the past is not forgotten. The calm that prevails now may be the precursor of the fury of the storm. A mighty ticklish thing is this Choctaw legislature. Choctaw laws are wonderfully and fearfully made at times.

With the convening of the council came Capt. J. B. Guthrie of the thirteenth infantry, United States army, and twenty soldiers. He came as a precaution against possible trouble, something entirely probable in view of the events of the past year. He has his camp near the council-house, but will not go about it while the council is in session unless his official duties should call him there.

It looks a bit strange to see Dick Locke on the grounds, going as he pleases without an armed guard, when a few months ago his house was attacked and riddled with bullets, and for weeks he was in a fortified camp and the Choctaw militia were swearing dire vengeance against him. Today it is different. He meets his whilom enemies with a handshake and a friendly word follows. The casual observer would not think that there had been anything

in the past between them. But in spite of this outward show there is an under current of deep feeling between the factions of Locke and Jones, a feeling that may be repressed for all time or it may break forth at any moment.

Arriving here this morning both sides were wary and watchful. They sidled up to each other very much after the manner of game chickens advancing to the attack, but the truce was made and tonight they go about with apparently as much abandon as if no enmity had ever existed; but they watch each other all the same.

No one can tell what the council will do. It may do much. Indeed it is rumored that the session will be very short, because it is said there is little money to pay the members. If this be true they will not stay long. Under such an exigency they will speedily discover that little legislation is necessary just at this time. Treasurer McCurtain is not here and no one knows whether the treasury is in a depleted or plethoric condition. It is not known when he will arrive.

Among the acts which are of general interest that will likely be passed will be one extending general amnesty to all who were involved in the late political troubles which came near costing much blood and bringing the country under martial law. It is said that a strong pressure is being brought to bear to bring this about, and that the masses of the people, regardless of party affiliations, are anxious for it. They believe that their

fate as a nation and a people depends upon it.

The senate and house both met at 9 o'clock, The senate was already organized, except to select its clerical force. For this the following were chosen: D. B. Roebuck, journalist, George Scoot, recording secretary; Lewis Battiste, interpreter; S. L. Burnley, door-keeper. The aspirants for these places put themselves in nomination. There were numbers of them seeking the same place, many of whom were not in the race to the extent of getting a single vote. It was slow work. There were long pauses that would be harmful to the go-ahead Caucasian, but they don't seem to mind it.

In the house the progressives got the drop on the nationals. Past precedents were ignored and Wesley Anderson was chosen speaker before the by-laws governing the deliberations of the house were adopted. The members elected by the national party were not all present, only two or three in fact. This was done early. In the afternoon more nationals had come in and made an effort to have the election of speaker reconsidered, but they failed.

Wesley Anderson, the speaker is the representative from Jacks Fork county, whose seat is contested by James Hudson. Hudson claims that Anderson was given the certificate of election by the throwing out of the Antlers box. When all the members get here, if they have a majority, Anderson will be ousted as speaker and member and Hudson will represent Jacks Fork county, in the house.

This contest may cause trouble. The nationals feel sore

over the action of the house to-day. They say they have been outraged long enough. Hon. C. E. Nelson, the national attorney, says Anderson's election as speaker of the house was clearly unconstitutional and therefore all acts passed by this council will be illegal and void.

This afternoon the house completed its organization by electing the following: Cy Lands, doorkeeper; L. W. Frazier, journalist; Sol Holmes, clerk: A. R. Durant, interpreter.

The canvas of votes for national officers will probably be made tomorrow. The entire national ticket has been elected, unless it is Jacob B. Jackson, who may be defeated for national secretary by T. W. Hunter, the progressive candidate.

Gov. Jones is here. It is not known when his message will be sent in nor can his recommendations be surmised. However, it will be looked for with eager interest.

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