

INDIAN CITIZEN SUPPLEMENT

Atoka, Indian Territory
Thursday, July 23, 1903
Vol. 18 No. 11
G. M'Pherson, D. M. Hailey, Editor's.

LETTER OF JOHN PROVISO TO GREEN McCURTAIN AND G. W. DUKES.

Sulphur Springs,

July 14, 1903.

The District court for the second district convened here at nine O'clock a. m. on July 13th, 1903, with a large gathering of Indians present. Judge H. D. Anderson organized the court in the morning hour and conducted the proceedings in a way that would be creditable to a veteran jurist.

The first case reached on the docket was that of Julius Jefferson a full-blood Choctaw boy, charged with burglary. He entered a plea of guilty and was sentenced by the court to receive twenty-five lashes on the bare back, the sheriff immediately put the order into execution by administering the punishment.

In the afternoon the benches were removed from the court house to a shady spot, and Gov. McCurtain addressed the big gathering in his native tongue, he reviewed the history

of the Choctaws from the making of the Atoka Agreement up to the difficulties encountered and his attitude on all public questions. He begged his people with great fervor and stirring eloquence, not to part with their propriety, but to preserve it for themselves and children. He explained in vigorous language the reasons that led to the temporary withdrawal of the pine lands from allotment and promised his hearers when the Indians rights were properly safe-guarded that these lands would be allotted in accordance with the spirit and letter of the law as contained in the terms of Supplementary Agreement. His address made a profound impression on the Choctaws present and created consternation in the ranks of those who have seen proper to oppose his policy.

Ex Gov Dukes was present and attempted to answer and explain the position of those who oppose Gov. McCurtain's policy, he said substantially, that he was opposed to the Atoka Agreement, but that he was persuaded to vote for it; that he was in favor of the Supplementary Agreement, yet was not satisfied with it, and that he now opposed it. The Ex governor made a very unfavorable impression, the fact that the Supplementary agreement was made during his administration and that the platform of the Protective party endorsed it, and the further fact, that he is the nominee of that party for treasurer, his present attitude on these

public questions did not please the vast crowd that was present. The opinions seem to prevail, that his views were too wishy-washy, that his opinion today would not reflect his views tomorrow and that as a leader and thinker he was a flat failure. Gov. McCurtain in his rejoinder, called the attention of the audience to the Ex. governors short comings and said that one of Dukes great faults as that the people never knew where to find him. He completely unhorsed the Ex. governor on the pine timber controversy and agricultural lease and showed him up in a very unfavorable light. It was evident to the crowd that the Ex-governor was not only winking at these outrageous practices but was actually participating in the profits, by advising the Indian people to surrender their rights to the timber sharks and the leasors of agricultural lands.

The most dramatic incident of the debate occurred when the speaker replying to the Ex Govs. charge that \$40 000 had been contributed in the last campaign by coal men, and that Gov. McCurtain had made the deal in St. Louis, when challenged by the Governor to name his informant, the Ex-governor retired behind the weak subterfuge "I dont remember," Governor McCurtain turning to the audience asked them if they believed such a statement. That the idea of a man claiming respectability, standing up in a public address and making such a charge and then saying in response to a challenge to produce his authority,

that "I don't remember" was too contemptible to answer, but that he would answer it, by saying that Dukes knew he was circulating a falsehood, that no body would believe. The Governor said that if Dukes would secure an affidavit to that effect he would publish it. The Governor then indulged in a very scathing denunciation of the campaign of slander and falsehood which Dukes and his followers had pursued in the last campaign much to the delight of the crowd present.

It was a red letter day among the Indians for McCurtain and his policy. There were many prominent Choctaws present, W. W. Wilson National chairman of the Tushkahoma Party was among them. He is a serious and sincere advocate of the rights of the people. A few minutes talk with him will convince the most skeptical of this fact, the earnest support that he lends the policy of Gov. McCurtain in the fight for the preservation of Indians rights, gives great weight to that contention in this section of the country. The popular Ed Wilson who is the nominee of his party for national secretary was present, fixing his fences to roll up a big majority, in the good old summer time.

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