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TRIBAL CONSTITUTION

Laws there are, in volume inexhaustible, and laws there always have been from time immemorial—about, of, concerning, guiding, governing and explaining every act of man or beast. Some are readable, some laughable, and some are useful, although there are many people who may say nay.

In the year 1838, nearly a century ago, a band of Indians met at a point in the hills of Indian territory where many springs of pure, sparkling water poured their thirst-quenching fluid from the mountain side in sufficient quantity to start a small rivulet coursing its way through the valley, and the outstretched limbs of the mammoth oaks furnished refreshing shade, and there held a pipe-smoking peace meeting from which was evolved "The Constitution of the Cherokee Nation."

Up to this time there had been two nations of the Cherokee—the eastern and western Cherokees, but having been brought together in this beautiful land by the government of the United States they found that it behooved them to live as one and for that purpose the great men of the tribes came to this meeting, but maybe the preamble of that document will better explain matters:

The eastern and western Cherokees having again reunited, and become one body politic, under the style and title of the Cherokee nation; Therefore, we, the people of the Cherokee nation, in national convention assembled, in order to establish justice, insure tranquility, promote the common welfare, and to secure to ourselves and our posterity the blessings of freedom, acknowledging with humility and gratitude, the goodness of the sovereign ruler of the universe, in permitting us so to do, and imploring his aid and guidance in its accomplishment—do ordain and establish this constitution for the government of the Cherokee Nation.

Being just as conclusive and enlightened as ever preamble was, since they first began to preamble constitutions, documents, and any article that could use one, and one may guess that this great and august gathering in which the names of men such as these appears: Crying Buffalo, Black Flute, Soft Shell Turtle and Tobacco Will spent several hours in deep reflection and discussion—the same as was done by the constitutional convention of the great state of Okla-

homa— of whether it should read Supreme Being, God, Lord, or what, and other such weighty questions.

But it is in general just about like the constitution of these enlightened days and would suit very well for any state government, excepting for the fact that it provides that title to lands of the nation shall be in the nation.

The plan of the government is democratic and follows in part that of the United States.

It has a "fourteenth amendment" which was added to the constitution on November 26, 1866.

In the laws of the nation are found very little of an unusual or freakish nature but many good features, and some of these laws are really in accord with present day enlightenment and have been adopted in the fierce fights for present-day betterment of conditions.

For instance, they have a law making it a crime for anyone to offer for sale any food or drink that had been adulterated in such a manner as to render it injurious to health, or who should offer for sale any drugs or medicine without a label thereon giving to the buyer knowledge of any adulteration. Also for any man to give short weights was a crime and a table is given which establishes the weight of the common commodities.

Betting on elections was a misdemeanor, and destroying the forest was also prohibited.

The salaries paid to officers of the nation in that time would appeal to the average tax grumbler of today, as the chief was paid only \$1,000 a year and other officers usually about \$500.

The high sheriff received \$500 and out of that paid his deputy and furnished wood for the fires in the capitol building.

The convicts were used to work on roads and cut wood for the national institutions.

One law that would be antiquated in this age was that a person not a citizen of the nation who made himself objectionable to the authorities was to be taken to the line and kicked out of the nation with the injunction to remain out.

Any artisan, not a citizen of the nation, had to have a permit before he could practice his trade in the nation, for this he paid \$1 a month, and as soon as his work was completed he had to leave the confines.

No license was required for citizens to marry, but if

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