

WHITE ADVISOR TO SEMINOLES

SAVES KILLER

Seminole Change Ancient Penalty Prescribed For Tribesmen Who Commit Murder, at Suggestion of W. Stanley Hanson.

HIGH COUNCIL RULES THAT SLAYER MUST PROVIDE

FOR WIDOW VICTIM

By Horece A. Dunn

For the first known time in the hectic and picturesque history of the Seminole Indians of Florida the counsel of a white man has been accepted and one redskin owes his life to W. Stanley Hanson, veteran of the Everglades and life-long friend of the red men who inhabit the vast wilderness of the Big Cypress, known as "America's Last Frontier."

Mr. Hanson, loved and trusted by the Indians, is probably the one and only white man received in the tribe. He is affectionately known to the Seminoles as the "White Medicine Man" and in abiding by his advice the tribesmen and ranking medicine men have placed faith such as has never before been known to have been confided to a "pale face." The high Indian council, upon the white ambassador's recommendation, recently deviated from the age old "eye for an eye" custom and spared--the life of an convicted tribal slayer upon the extraordinary condition--that he provide the widow of his victim with the necessities of life for the remainder of he days on earth.

Make Their Own Laws

Such a course of justice would be frowned on in the courts of the white man for it does not appear on the statute books, but the Indian is not governed by any set rules of law. The squaw of a murdered man was left wanting and the red man's code calls for the protection of his women. It is a new form of punishment and if the killer fails in his duties to make an annual field for the aged squaw, his life will be automatically forfeited.

So there is at least one member of the tribe who can thank a white man for his life, for if the regular Indian custom had been carried out he would very probably have been executed in accordance with Seminole traditions--

White Advisor to Seminoles (Cont.)

the deadly "black drink of Osceola." The slayer, Doctor John, known in the tribe as No-so-ma-tee, was found guilty of murder at the annual "Green Corn Dance," held several weeks ago at a lonely spot in the heart of the Everglades, known to the Seminole as the "Grassy waters," when the high council heard his case. He had struck a fatal blow while under the influence of white man's "fire water" and Cor-na-pat-chee, one of the elder leaders of the tribe had crumbled under the heavy cudgel to die almost instantly. Tweeoe-areixkwn rhw young warrior is said to have fled into the great wilderness to hide from the penalty he knew would be dealt out by tribal leaders.

Slaying Year Old

The slaying took place at Cor-na-pat-chee's camp more than a year ago and shortly after the news made its way out of the uncharted territory to the civilized world, reports were released from Miami which told a gruesome tale of supposed Seminole justice. It was reported that Charlie Tigertail, another tribesman, had been designated to avenge the death of Cor-na-pat-chee by taking the life of the alleged killer by the same means used in ending the life of the aged medicine man. Tigertail was said to have tracked Doctor John through the Everglades and was reported to have slain him when he was finally captured.

This story was promptly denied and as proof of the denial Doctor John was found living at a camp near the Tamiami trail in Collier county. The Indians pointed out that nothing would be done until the annual "Green Corn Dance" when all tribal offenders are punished.

Hanson Advises Indians

Cor-na-pat-chee was dead but his squaw, "Little Nance" was left to be cared for and the Indians were at a loss to decide on what punishment to hand down. They consulted their white ambassador who was strongly in favor of sparing the killer's life in view of the fact that he was under the influence of whiskey when the crime was committed. He suggested that Doctor John be allowed to live with the stipulation that he provide an annual field for the aged squaw.

White Advisor to Seminoles (Cont.)

The medicine men took the matter under consideration and when they assembled at the "Green Corn Dance" they handed down the decision as recommended by Mr. Hanson. It proved satisfactory to all parties concerned and Doctor John set out immediately to cultivate a small farm for the widow of the man he had slain while in a wild rage of drunkenness.

Thus the life of Cor-na-pat-chee has been avenged and a new code of punishment added to the red man's statutes.