

Cattaraugus, for the purpose of taking into consideration the state of their national affairs; and the result was a determination to reform their entire political system.

Accordingly on the 14<sup>th</sup> of the 12<sup>th</sup> month, 1848, they organized themselves into a General Convention of the nation, and with great unanimity abolished their old form of Government by Chiefs, and adopted a written Constitution, with a Legislative, Executive, and Judiciary Departments, the officers to be chosen by the people, and the elective franchise to be extended to every male citizen of their Republic over 21 years of age. And notwithstanding that there has been and still is, a systematic opposition to this Government on the part of the old Chiefs, who, under the new order of things, find themselves deprived of the arbitrary power they long had exercised and often abused. We are informed by our Superintendent, that so far, the authority delegated under their new Constitution, has been judiciously administered, and that there is a fair prospect the change in their Government will prove of advantage to the Nation, by securing equal rights to the people; and at the same time by calling into action their intellectual powers, their intelligence will be increased, and their civilization accelerated. Our Superintendent further remarks, that already there are in the Legislative Council, some judicious men of liberal and enlarged views, who understand their position, and appear disposed to devote their time, and if necessary, to sacrifice their individual

interests to the public good.

The Constitutional Government thus established, has been recognized by the Government of the United States, and by the authorities of the State of New York, within the territorial jurisdiction of which State, the Lands of these Indians lie; and the Officers elected and appointed under it, have also been acknowledged by the State Government, as the legitimate Representatives and Agents of the Seneca Nation. By this Constitution, thus formally acknowledged, it is provided, that "no treaty shall hereafter be binding upon the Nation, until the same shall have been submitted to the people, and be approved by three-fourths of all the legal voters, and by three-fourths of all the mothers of the Nation." This provision it is believed, will hereafter effectually guarantee to these often deceived and greatly wronged people, the entire security of their lands.

Thus we view the Seneca Nation with a regular Constitutional Government "calculated" to use their own language "to answer the purposes for which all government should be created." We also find their warriors mostly withdrawn from the field, and occupying their proper station in their families, and their children suitably educated at home; and receiving at schools established among themselves, the benefit of literary and scientific learning.

It is under these circumstances the Anti-Slavery Convention came to the conclusion, that the female manual labor school at Cattaraugus, hitherto under the care