

ADVOCATES NEW POLICY

THINKS INDIANS SHOULD ENJOY FULL
CITIZENSHIP WHEN CAPABLE



UNDER the date of December 9, a dispatch from Washington to the Oregonian contained much that will be of interest to our Indian readers. Following is an excerpt from the dispatch:

A definite, constructive policy for the Indian, by which he may be transformed from a ward of the Government to a successful and integral part of the American citizenry; a discussion of the development of the West; and a review of the achievements of the last year are contained in the annual report of Secretary Lane, of the Interior Department, sent today to President Wilson.

"Three things," says Secretary Lane, "of unusual purport have marked the life of this Department during the past year—the passing of the Cherokee Nation, the opening of Alaska and the advancement of a series of measures aimed to promote the further development of the West."

Secretary Lane discusses the Indian problem at length, and asks whether "it is for the benefit of the Indian himself that the present almshouse policy" should continue.

"The American conscience, our sense of justice, our traditions, in fact, will not permit the adoption of a drastic course that would cast the Indian upon a world for which he is ill-prepared," he says. "Yet I am of the opinion that it would be better, to sever all ties between the Indian and the Government, give every man his own and let him go his way to success or destruction, rather than to keep alive in the Indian the belief that he is to remain a ward to the Government."

"The way out is gradually and wisely to put the Indian out. Our goal is the free Indian. The orphan-asylum idea must be killed in the mind of the Indian and white man. The Indian should know that he is upon the road to enjoy or suffer full capacity. He is to have his opportunity as a 'forward-looking man.'

"It is my conclusion, after as intimate a study as practicable, of his nature and needs, that we should henceforth make a positive and systematic effort to cast the full burden of independence and responsibility on an increasing number of the Indians of all tribes. I find that there is a statute which significantly empowers the Secretary of the Interior to do this in individual cases. That authority is adequate. I intend to use such authority."