

## MAKES STRONG PLEA

OPPOSE CONGRESSIONAL LEGISLATION NOW PENDING



ON April 5th there appeared in the New York Post a dispatch from Washington, D. C., which will be of great interest to a large majority of our readers. The article in question follows:

Indian legislation now pending in Congress is attacked by Joseph H. Choate, one time United States ambassador to Great Britain, in a letter to John H. Stephens, chairman of the House Committee on Indian Affairs. Mr. Choate points out that when questions of great national moment are absorbing attention there is danger that matters affecting our domestic affairs may be neglected or overlooked. His letter follows in part:

“The welfare of our Indians is a solemn national obligation. We have no more sacred trust than the protection of the weak from being overreached by the strong. From the earliest times the intent of our people has been to give the Indian that protection.

“Legislation now is pending in Congress which, if adopted, may overturn the present Indian policy, and subject the Indian to the worst possible forms of spoliation, not only from outsiders, but from unscrupulous persons within the tribal membership. The bill (H. R., 108) introduced by Congressman Hastings in the House of Representatives would confer on the superintendent of the Five Civilized Tribes the authority now vested in the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and the Secretary of the Interior respecting the lands and individual moneys of the enrolled members of the Five Civilized Tribes of Oklahoma. About one-third of the Indian population in the United States belongs to these tribes, with more than thirty thousand restricted Indians; their property including over three million acres of valuable individually owned land. Perhaps the greatest oil field in the world has been developed in the country of the Five Tribes, from which enormous wealth has accrued for these people.

“Under existing law, the superintendent of these tribes is nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate, the appointment being political. The pending bill (H. R., 108) proposes to turn over to this appointee full power and authority over this vast estate, and naturally every pressure, local and otherwise, would be brought to bear on any one clothed with this great responsibility.

“With respect to the Hastings bill, Arthur C. Parker, a highly intelligent Indian, engaged in important educational work for the State of