

## TO END ROBBERY OF INDIAN MINORS

Secretary Lane Pushes Crusade In Oklahoma.

### TO MAKE COMPLETE INQUIRY

Some Lawyers and Guardians Have Already Been Indicted For Embezzling Estate Funds—Commissioner Sells Aiding In Probe—Cheating of Children a Disgrace, He Says.

Washington.—Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane and his director of the bureau of Indian affairs, Cato Sells, have launched a vigorous campaign against prominent persons in Oklahoma who, it is alleged, have been robbing the minor Indians of the five civilized tribes out of their birthrights.

"I am determined that the Indian minors in Oklahoma shall have better protection," said Secretary Lane. "Their property rights must be safeguarded."

"They are on an average the richest children in the United States and have less protection for their property rights than the children of any other state. It is estimated that, while the approximate cost is 3 per cent to settle a white minor's estate, the expense of administering the estate of an Indian minor is at least 20 per cent. Guardian fees, attorney fees and other expenses make up this charge. In many cases gross misappropriation of funds has been found."

"Where there has been misappropriation of funds there will be prosecutions."

The tribal attorneys of the Five Civilized Tribes have been directed to act at once on cases of alleged frauds. One tribal attorney wired as follows to Secretary Lane:

"Began presenting evidence to grand jury on indictments in matters affecting management of Creek minors' estates. Grand jury just returned true bills against two prominent business men for embezzlement, one prominent



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FRANKLIN K. LANE.

attorney for embezzlement, another prominent attorney for obtaining money under false pretenses and against guardians in other cases."

Later telegrams told of the indictment of two attorneys on a charge of embezzling funds of Creek minors in their hands as guardians, the indictment for embezzlement in cases of two other guardians, the indictment of three leading attorneys charged with practicing deceit upon the court in obtaining approval of exorbitant allowances as attorneys' fees and an indictment against the guardian and former district court clerk for embezzlement of Creek minors' funds.

The situation in Oklahoma, Mr. Sells says, is a disgrace to the nation. In forty counties, he says, there are from 800 to 1,500 probate cases pending, and 85 per cent of these involve Indians. It costs seven times as much to settle an Indian minor's estate as it does the estate of a white child.

It is charged by Secretary Lane and Mr. Sells that guardians for the Indian minors are almost universally appointed without regard to fitness or responsibility, the purpose being to benefit some other person who would rob the minor. Bonds have been made in many cases without regard to the solvency of the bondsmen.

Mr. Sells declared that in many cases no actual reports have been made by those settling estates, and on final settlement the minors found themselves without property. In numbers of instances guardians absconded and bondsmen were insolvent, leaving the minors destitute, charges upon the public.

This sort of thing has gone on so long, explained Mr. Sells, that there seems to be a common understanding that the property of an Indian minor is common prey.

The blame for this state of affairs has not been definitely fixed. The judges of the courts have been handicapped by the enormous amount of probate work and could not give the attention to the matter of minors' estates that it deserved.

Mr. Sells has instructed the tribal attorneys to pay attention not only to the tribal affairs, but the individual troubles of the Indians. Assistants will be given to tribal attorneys so that there will be no lack of counsel. The investigation will extend to every probate case. A list of all the cases handled and a history of each case are being prepared.

## Indians Camp on Skyscraper So as to Feel "at Home" In Chicago



We pitch our tepees high above the gorge  
Of city life that shelters maddened men—  
Wild in pursuit of pelf, of pelf galore,  
While pelts suffice us for our winter store.

—Chief Eagle Calf, Poet and Interpreter of the Glacier National Park Reservation, Montana.

Here on the summit of your storied hill  
We near the stars and see beyond your ken  
The distant plain—the wealthy plowman's voice  
On prairie land—and wonder at your choice!

CHICAGO.—Upon the roof top of the skyscraper building, Hotel Sherman, the Blackfeet Indian chiefs from Glacier National park pitched their tepee village as the most desirable spot for sleeping quarters during their three weeks' stay in Chicago in attendance at the United States Land show. In selecting this unique camping place, high above the roar of traffic, these Rocky mountain Indians not only found conditions congenial to the high altitude of their native environment, but they commemorated the spot upon which their brothers of the Pottawatomie tribe had their lodges long before there appeared the first evidences of the great city to which they gave the Indian name Chi-ca-go.

Eagle Calf, interpreter of the visiting band of Blackfeet, found inspiration when he gazed over the parapet of the great hotel down into the "antlike working" industry of white men surging to and fro in the throbbing life of civilization, which presented an unceasing motion picture panorama such as he never before had beheld.

"More white men than I ever saw in my entire life," was his comment. The more he looked down upon the busy scene of Chicago bustle the more animated he became. The foregoing verse he scribbled with a lead pencil and presented to Eugene Belfield, one of the proprietors of the hotel. Mr. Belfield was so impressed with the lines that he had them framed and hung in the lobby. It was the first time he ever knew that an Indian was capable of such poetical expression. Eagle Calf was educated in an Indian school and speaks English quite fluently. The rhythmic thought, he explained to Mr. Belfield, he absorbed from nature, which, he explained, is garbed in its most surpassing beauty "upon the roof of the continent" in the Rocky mountains, where he grew up.

Hundreds of guests of Hotel Sherman visited the Indians' roof top camp during their stay in Chicago, and at the Coliseum, where the land show was held, they also had a village established in the annex, the entire space of which was given over to the Glacier National park exhibit installed by Louis W. Hill, chairman of the Great Northern railway. It is estimated that more than 150,000 people passed through the entrance to the Glacier park exhibit, a portion of which was devoted to a lecture room with a seating capacity of 1,000. In this lecture room moving pictures of Glacier park were shown revealing the scenic wonders of Uncle Sam's newest playground. The walls of the exhibit room proper were hung with costly scenic paintings, which to the hordes of Chicagoans proved a marvelous scenic revelation of mountain grandeur, beautiful lakes and awe inspiring glaciers. The actual photographic reproductions shown in great sections of brilliantly illuminated transparencies were even more wonderful to them.

These latter actualities the Indians pointed to with pride, explaining to the throng of ejaculating paleface visitors, "This is the country where we live—where the Great Spirit created his wonders."

Nobody doubted after beholding the scenes of artistic splendor shown in oils and photographic reproduction. In the throngs of sightseers were many people who had visited Glacier park. They came, enthusiastically leading friends by the hands through the Glacier park exhibit, pointing to this scene and that one as if confirming natural wonders the existence of which their friends had been unable to conceive.

### 1913 Was A Good Year.

Portland, Or., Jan. 6, (Special)—While in some single items Oregon's yield in 1913 was somewhat below that of the previous year, her total product for the year has never been surpassed. The market value of cereals produced in the state was approximately \$5,000,000 less than for 1912, but with this one exception material gains were made in all agricultural lines. The following figures indicate that the state is maintaining the rapid advance in material wealth established in previous years:

GRAINS AND HAY		
Wheat, bushels	19,150,000	\$15,325,000
Barley, "	4,000,000	3,380,000
Oats, "	12,500,000	2,900,000
Rye, "	350,000	310,000
Corn, "	850,000	525,000
Hay, tons	1,300,000	14,000,000
Total for 1913		39,440,000
Total for 1912		43,488,000
VEGETABLES		
Total for 1913		\$18,530,000

LIVESTOCK		
Cattle, Head	560,000	\$42,000,000
Dairy Cows "	212,000	18,900,000
Hogs "	1,000,000	14,000,000
Sheep "	1,825,000	7,225,000
Horses "	279,000	20,000,000
Mules "	8,930	1,780,000
Goats "	187,000	280,000
Total for 1913		\$104,185,000
Total for 1912		102,494,000

### FRUITS AND NUTS

Total for 1913	\$9,070,220
Total for 1912	6,430,000

### WOOL AND MOHAIR

Total for 1913	\$2,917,000
Total for 1912	2,761,000

### MISCELLANEOUS PRODUCTS

Butter, lbs.	20,000,000	\$7,000,000
Cheese, "	9,000,000	1,440,000
Milk-Cream, gal.	29,000,000	13,000,000
Total for 1913		\$21,440,000
Total for 1912		16,090,000

### OTHER PRODUCTS

Including poultry, eggs, hops, salmon and other fish, honey, etc.		\$48,975,000
Total for 1913		\$48,975,000
Total for 1912		38,017,000

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