THE INDIAN CHIEFTAIN.

OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE INDUSTRIAL UNION "In Things Essential, Unity; In all Things, Charity."

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A LOW PLANE OF PARTY MORALITY.

[An editorial in the *Kansas Farmer* of July 8, by Senator Peffer.]

It is no wonder Senator Ingalls said that the purification of politics is an iridescent dream; and it is no wonder further, that when he was criticised for his language, he replied by saying that he stated a fact and described a condition, that he was not giving his own opinion of what ought to be. It has come to pass, that men in private and in public position will maintain deception and manufacture falsehood in order to deceive the people and keep them within the traces of party harness. If there has been more than two of our public errors discarded by the parties since the great war, there is no record of the fact. When the people protested against the wholesale spoliation of the public lands in the interest of wealthy corporations both of the great parties responded by amending their platforms to correspond to the public will; and again, when the alien labor-contract law of 1864 was discovered to have been passed, and to be in opposition to public interests, public clamor had the effect to change party opinions upon that subject, and an act was passed to prohibit importation of labor under contract. Those are the only two instances in which our parties, after having discovered error, abandoned it. There are many other instances where they have learned that they were leading in wrong directions, but have been so closely tied to the power of wealth, which as Mr. Henry Clews says, is moving the interests of the whole world, that they are unable, and it seems unwilling, to cut loose from the tie that binds them. Latterly, they discovered errors in several new directions, one relating to the tariff on imported goods, another in relation to the indebtedness of the people; but in both these cases they absolutely refuse to change their methods or their doctrine to correspond to the needs and to the demands of the people. Just now, the party press is engaged in a heated discussion of the debt question. Within the last two weeks we have received a great many copies of papers containing marked articles commenting upon the Cooper Union speech delivered by the editor of this paper, June 22, on the money question. These papers come from all sections of the Union, excepting the South, and 90 per cent. of them are criticisms of the speech, using assertion instead of argument, vituperation instead of logic. Coming closer home, our old neighbor, the *Capital*, is striking harder than any of them. It always goes hard with us to unfavorably criticise anything which the *Capital* says editorially. So long have our relations with that paper been friendly, and so many years were those relations very close, that it is painful to witness its floundering and its determination to write for its masters without regard for the truth. Last summer, very regretfully, we charged that paper with willfully and deliberately conspiring with others to deceive the people upon important matters, and now, painful as the process is, we are compelled, in justice to the people, to repeat our charge and to again say that the *Capital* not only does deliberately and persistently insist upon deceiving the people, but that with the same knowledge and the same deliberate intent to deceive, it willfully and knowingly withholds from the people important truths which they ought to know and for which they are seeking day by day, as they pray for their daily bread. This sort of language, as the readers of the KANSAS FARMER very well know, is not according to our custom, but the time has come for blows. If men will deliberately falsify records and misrepresent conditions, regardless of the interests of the people, and if they insist upon maintaining party advantages without regard to public interests, it is time for us to begin a war that will in the end destroy the intrenchments behind which these men are working.

The text to this article may be found in editorial matter contained in the Daily *Capital* of this city in its issues during the last six days, beginning with its article of last Thursday, under the head of "Two Guesses by Senator Peffer." The intention of the *Capital* is to show that either the Senator was wrong three years ago in his estimate of the mortgage indebtedness of the people or that he is wrong now, and that in either case he must necessarily be a liar. The intention of the *Capital*, in the second place, is to show that the Senator is not only willfully peddling falsehood among the people, but that he is doing it from sinister motives, and that he is purposely slandering his own State in order that he may gain some personal or political advantage.

Files of the KANSAS FARMER, of which the Senator was then and is now editor, and files of the *Capital*, of which he at that time was associate editor, are reproduced to show what were his opinions then concerning the indebtedness of the people. That is all very well, and we are pleased to know that in that respect at least the *Capital* is disposed to be truthful. Now, if the *Capital* will do as the KANSAS FARMER has done, manfully acknowledge that at that time we were all ignorantly in error, and that while we all believed the mortgage indebtedness of our people was not burdensome, more recent investigations have shown we were wrong and that official investigation by the Census Bureau gives us the exact truth. We were not only in error, but our error was very great indeed. For example, if the reader will refer to the KANSAS FARMER for 1888, he will find in our issue of August 16, toward the close of an article under the head "Kansas Farm Mortgages," after referring to the municipal indebtedness of the State and estimating it to be about $20,000,000, we placed the aggregate indebtedness upon farms at about $80,000,000. The same statement was made afterwards in the *Capital*, the same person having written both. That was in August, 1888, and the matter was written the first time that our attention had been called to this subject. So startling were the figures presented by the St. Louis *Republican*, whose statements we were combating, that an estimate was made, based upon what we at the time presumed to be reasonable, without pretending to know anything about the subject in exactness, we gave our reasoning at the time. Those articles in the FARMER and in the *Capital* called down upon us innumerable criticisms. Responsible men in different parts of the State gave us what they said they knew to be facts concerning the actual indebtedness of the people in their particular localities. So many and so earnest were these criticisms that we extended our investigations, revising our estimate as a result, and in "The Way Out," which was prepared in the latter part of 1889, we had come to the conclusion that our figures were too low by about 50 per cent.; that in fact the farm mortgage indebtedness of the people of Kansas amounted to but little, if any, less than $60,000,000. The criticisms upon that statement satisfied us that we were probably still too low, but we were not willing to revise the estimate until we had official information concerning the fact; and in all of our political writings during the year 1890, and in all of the public addresses made by the editor of the KANSAS FARMER during that year, $60,000,000 was taken as being about the correct figures. With others we united in what came to be a very general demand upon the authorities to have this mortgage question thoroughly investigated by the Census Bureau, and after a long and earnest siege, Congress appropriated a million dollars for that purpose in a supplementary act. Early in April of this year, Mr. Porter gave us the first figures, and in a preliminary review of the situation, he showed us that there were at that time in his possession at Washington, abstracts of about 9,000,000 mortgages upon the farms and homes of the people in this country, and under date of April 22, he gave us Census Bulletin No. 3, containing the official figures for two States, Iowa and Alabama. The writer of this called upon the officers of the Census Bureau before that bulletin appeared and learned from them that as soon as possible after Alabama and Iowa were disposed of, Kansas and Tennessee would be taken up, and that the country would have in official form the exact situation concerning the indebtedness of the people in those two States. At that time the necessary data had been collected for all of the States, excepting as to the reasons for the indebtedness. The collecting of this particular sort of information necessarily requires a house-to-house canvass or a correspondence from headquarters. The abstracts on file show the names of persons who are indebted. Then, by answering questions sent out from the Census Bureau to those persons inquiring concerning the cause of indebtedness, the facts are given by the persons themselves. This is a very laborious undertaking and necessarily requires a good deal of time. It is probably because of this fact that the delay in publishing results obtained has been great.

Now, concerning the actual amount of farm indebtedness in Kansas. On the 14th day of last April, Superintendent Porter wrote a letter to the editor of the Topeka *Advocate* concerning the farm mortgage indebtedness in Kansas, in which he states that Dr. McLallin's estimate of $147,000,000 "is not likely to be very far from the existing debt, established by the Census office." That is only $13,000,000 less than was given by Senator Peffer in his Cooper Union speech. We now state that we have in our possession in this office, figures from official sources which we believe to be correct and which will be given to the people, if desired, at any time after the census figures for Kansas are published. Our figures cover every county in the State, and not only for one month, or for six months, or for one year, but for ten years, beginning with the year 1881 and ending with the year 1889. We have figures showing the number of mortgages which were placed on record during those ten years, covering the farms and the city homes of the people of Kansas. Where we obtained those figures and how does not matter, just now. We give them out as being at least substantially correct. They show that during the ten years the total number of mortgages placed upon farms and city lots in Kansas amounted to over 620,000; that the amount of money secured by those mortgages amounted to nearly $483,000,000; that the amount covering farms was nearly $344,000,000; that the amount covering city lots was nearly $140,000,000. It appears further, that nearly one-half of the total amount placed on record during the ten years was unpaid on the first day of January, 1890. To be more specific, the actual amount of indebtedness upon the homes of the people of Kansas—farms and city lots—in the beginning of the census year was about $320,000,000, of which amount $160,000,000 is secured by mortgage on farms, and $70,000,000 secured by mortgage upon city lots. These figures, let it be said, are given as substantially correct, with the additional information that if the census report does not show about the same facts which we give concerning this matter, we will give the source of our information to the people so that they may know how it happens that our figures differ from those of the Census Bureau. We cannot be very far wrong when Mr. Porter, the Superintendent, gives in advance, over his own signature for publication the statement that $147,000,000 will be found to be very nearly correct.

Taking $160,000,000 to be the farm indebtedness of the people of Kansas, and taking the assessed valuation of our farm property in 1888 as a standard of its value, namely, $168,000,000 (the present valuation is lower than that), we have a margin of $8,000,000 of farm values over and above the actual indebtedness of the farms themselves. It will be said that this is not a fair valuation. The KANSAS FARMER is not responsible for the fairness of the valuation. However, the particular part of the Cooper Union speech which is most criticised is the statement that one-half of the people's homes are under mortgage for more than they would sell for upon thirty days notice. It is said, in answer to this, that not more than one-half of the homes of Kansas are mortgaged. The *Capital* admits, however, that two-thirds of the farms are mortgaged. Lest it should be said that we do the *Capital* an injustice, we will quote one sentence in its article under the title of "Peffer's Ridiculous Defense." After showing some figures, the *Capital* proceeds: "Fully one-third of all the farmers in Kansas to-day are living on farms free from mortgages." This is an admission that two-thirds of the farms are mortgaged, yet the claim in the Cooper Union speech did not exceed one-half. But it will be said that the assessed valuation of property in Kansas is not the true valuation. Very well. We have not said that it was. We have frequently said that it was not; but whether we are wrong or right about this does not matter. Let us multiply the farm valuation ($168,000,000) by three, and we have $504,000,000. According to the *Capital's* estimate one-third of the farms are clear; that would leave us $336,000,000 as the actual value of the farms which are mortgaged, if the true value is three times the assessment. The figures which we have given showing the farm indebtedness is $160,000,000. Multiplying that by two we have $320,000,000, which is just $16,000,000 less than the *Capital's* own figures. We have made the statement that one-half the farms are mortgaged for more than they would sell for on thirty days notice. Does the *Capital*, or does any person, honestly dispute that statement? What proportion of farms could be sold to-day for more than the debt that is due upon them? Why is it that there is no real estate boom in Kansas to-day? Why is it that in this respect Kansas is no exception to the general rule? All over the country there is nothing doing in real estate. Only here and there you hear of a farm being sold. Men who are clear of debt hold their property at high figures, and yet the statement is true that, taking the farms of the State generally, they would not sell for more than the mortgage debt. Indeed, that statement can be proven by the *Capital* itself. On the 31st day of last August that paper contained reports from forty-three counties in the State. The reports, which were said to be official, show that farms—not wild lands, but *farms*, were being sold in Kansas under foreclosure sales at the rate of over 5,000 a year. The *Capital* record covered six months of the year, showing less than one-half of the counties in the State; but the *Capital*, not the KANSAS FARMER, made a comparison for the whole State based upon the figures given for the forty-three counties, showing that if the same proportion held good for the entire State, the total number of sales of farms under mortgage foreclosure proceedings was equal to 2,650 for six months. We take the liberty of extending the same proportion over the whole year; that gives us, for one year, in Kansas, 5,300 farms sold to satisfy mortgage debts, and these are the *Capital's* own figures. In addition to that, we find that in an issue only a few days later—the following Friday, if our memory is not at fault—a report was given of the organization of a land syndicate to bring together, under one ownership, an immense acreage of land which was being transferred voluntarily to loan companies in order to satisfy mortgages. Every well informed person knows that a large number, a very large number of farms have been passed in this way into the hands of mortgagees without any proceedings in court at all. This voluntary surrender of the home saves the expense and humiliation of going into court; and it is fair to assume that this class of transfers of homes largely exceeds in number those which are sold under orders of court. It is safe to say that no matter what may be the actual worth of these farms, they cannot be sold for that amount, for if they could be, the owners would gladly sell them and if possible save a little margin between the worth of the farms and the amount of the mortgage debt. It is clear that if the people could sell property enough to pay their debts, the property would have been sold long ago. But suppose that every mortgage debtor in Kansas—and that includes two-thirds of them, according to the *Capital's* statement—were to put up their homes at public auction on thirty days notice, where could we find purchasers for them at more than their mortgage indebtedness, which is supposed to be only one-third of their value? Why is it that when a farm is sold under the order of court to satisfy a mortgage in nine cases out of ten the mortgagee is the purchaser? Why is it that to-day the loan companies of the State are burdened with lands which they do not want, but which they are compelled to take in order to save themselves, because the debtor cannot pay his debt? Why is it that in 90 per cent. of these sales the amount bid by the mortgagee, his agent or attorney, is not the amount of the debt, but simply enough to cover the cost of foreclosure, leaving a judgment for the amount of the debt hanging over the head of the mortgagor and his family? Why is it that owners of homes are clamoring for money to renew their loans, and in many instances are unable to obtain it? Why is it that in large numbers of cases the security, which was good three or four or five years ago for a loan, is not now good for an equal amount, when the land is as good as it was then, when additional improvements have been put upon the property, and when, as a matter of fact, the property is really worth more to-day than it was then? The plain, simple, truthful answer to all these questions is, that property values have fallen, so that the debtors are unable with the property they have on hand to pay their debts. In other words, the property of the people under existing conditions is not worth as much as their debts amount to. We have not said, at any time, and we do not say now that here and there and yonder a particular piece of land is not worth more than its assessed valuation, or that it is not worth and would not sell for as much as it was worth and would have brought five years ago. What we do say, and what every person knows to be true, whether he is willing to admit it or not, is that the market value of property, not only in Kansas but in all the agricultural States of the country and in all the agricultural sections of the States, has been so enormous that if it were put up at public auction on notice it would not sell for as much as the total indebtedness of the people.

It is time that our public men should acknowledge the actual conditions confronting them, and it is time that writers for the public press should not only be willing but anxious to give to the people the actual facts in order that our legislation may be made to correspond to what the conditions demand. You elect a man to public office and immediately stuff his ears full of false statements, intending primarily to influence his judgment in favor of the power which we all know is destroying the people. The census report shows, and we know without the fact being shown, that the people who are in debt are paying from 10 per cent. to 40 per cent. for the use of money, while no business, except that of money lending, is making anywhere near so large a profit. We all know that farming has not, in the last forty years, paid more than an average of 2 per cent. per annum on the value of the farmers' investments, and as a result of this, while we have been toiling to make homes for ourselves, we find that our condition has been growing worse instead of better; while the financial condition of the men to whom we are indebted is growing better and better every year. That is to say, the masses are growing poorer. The masses who do the hard work, who produce all the wealth in the country, while the few who lend the money are growing richer and more powerful, more impudent, arrogant and merciless every year.

Now, another statement. The *Capital* estimates that the real worth of farms in Kansas is three times their assessed valuation. That may be true, but if they are, is it not strange that nobody is willing to pay that for them? Is it not strange that money cannot be obtained for more than one-third of that estimated value? Is it not strange that when farms are sold under decrees of court that there are no purchasers for them at any price; that they are bid in at the costs of court? Then again, we have not estimated that all the land in the State is not worth as much as the debt which is due upon mortgaged farms. We have always included the railroad indebtedness and municipal indebtedness; but the *Capital* assumes that we are doing the railroads injustice, and asks why we do not give railroad figures as they really are. Let us see what those figures are. By reference to the first page of the report of the Kansas Board of Railroad Commissioners for 1890 it will be found that the bonded debt of all the roads on the 30th day of June, 1890, was $487,201,621. It appears, however, that this covers all of the mileage of the roads, outside of the State as well as inside. By turning to pages 158 and 159 of the same report, it will be found that the figures for Kansas roads alone—that is to say, the mileage which is within the borders of our State, putting together the bonded debt and the stock account, which the Railroad Commissioners in this same table regard as "indebtedness," the total amount is $456,617,025. The bonded debt is about one-half of this amount, or $236,000,000. There is no reason, however, why the stock which appears upon the books of the company, and upon which the people are compelled to pay dividends, should not be included in the debt just as the Commissioners themselves did in the table above referred to. The reader will find the words "total indebtedness" in next to the last column of the table on page 159, making the total amount for the entire system of roads outside of the State as well as inside, including bonds and stocks, at $964,952,890; but by a little calculation from the figures given in the table on the two pages above written, the reader can easily eliminate the debt on those portions of the road outside of the State from the total, leaving the actual amount on the lines in Kansas alone as above given, $456,617,025.

We herewith reproduce the table given in our last issue and challenge the attention of the readers to it:

LIABILITIES.

Capital stock of railroads	$456,000,000
Municipal debts	40,000,000
Farm mortgages	160,000,000
City mortgages	70,000,000
Total	$726,000,000

RESOURCES.

Assessed value of farms for taxation	$168,000,000
Assessed value of city lots for taxation	76,000,000
Assessed value of railroad property	57,000,000
Total	$301,000,000

It shows that our total indebtedness by record is $726,000,000, while our assessed valuation is $301,000,000. Inasmuch as a considerable portion of our property is free from debt, and that there is no lien upon it except as it comes under the general law covering bonded indebtedness, it makes the burden of the debt all the greater upon persons who are encumbered.

This is a very long article, but the importance of the subject is our only excuse. If all that has been written against our statements within the last ten days could be brought into one place, the reader would discover that it would occupy as much space as a fair-sized book. The *Capital* alone has devoted more than as much as would amount to one whole page of that paper within the time named, and all to show that our statements have not only been false but willfully false. The actual truth is, that in our real three years ago, we were, like a great many other people, innocently ignorant, but we have given the matter very careful attention since that time, and our opinions have been changed, because the truth has been against us. If the *Capital* and all of our critics will be as honest as the man that they are just now pleased to malign, they will give the figures as they do really appear; and in doing so they need not slander their own State, they need not assume to be repudiators, nor anarchists, nor demagogues, but they would be doing the people substantial service. We understand very well what the influence is that is moving all this criticism. It is the influence of the most dangerous power in Christendom. It is the influence of the power which assumes to be greater than monarchies. Mr. Henry Clews, in his book entitled "Twenty-eight Years in Wall Street," proclaims to the world that the power of Wall street is greater than that of monarchies. It is that power which has brought all this trouble upon the people. It is to get free from the influence of that power that this struggle between the people is now in progress. It is because of the firm hold which that power has upon the people that the struggle is so great. We find that instead of attempting to meet us half way, instead of being willing to reduce the rates of interest which have been prevailing in the country for many years, while the net profits on industry are constantly decreasing, they insist upon not only maintaining the old rates of interest, but increasing them, by a continual contraction of the currency volume, taking away from the people more than half of the most important instrument of commerce which they have, namely, money. These men, the most audacious gamblers in Christendom, are continually striving to make money more valuable in order to increase their own gains, notwithstanding they know very well that what makes them rich makes the people poor in a corresponding degree, because they produce nothing; they neither make cloth nor shoes, wheat nor pork, or anything which is serviceable to the people. They trade in what other men produce, and long before it is produced they are gambling in the probabilities of the extent of the production. It is their business from day to day to control the people's affairs, to take possession of the people's markets, to drain interest from the people's substance, to take mortgages on their homes, to get control of the property of the toilers. This is the power that moves the great newspapers of the country. Not one of the great papers of New York, or of Boston, of Chicago, or of Cincinnati or St. Louis, or any of the great cities of the country, is willing to strike one blow against this dangerous power.

A careful survey of the crop situation in the Northwest shows better prospects than for several years past. There is an unusually excellent stand of wheat in the No. 1 hard districts of Minnesota and North Dakota. The rains have been seasonable and the growing temperature just right. There has been no damage except in limited and isolated cases from winds, rains or insects. The Red River valley, in which there has never been a general failure, promises to beat its best record, when it produced 35,000,000 bushels of wheat. There is much anxiety among farmers there owing to the scarcity of hands, and it is feared that considerable grain will be lost unless help is secured. Farmers are offering from $2 to $2.50 a day and board for harvesters.

The notorious Prof. J. C. H. Swann is still on earth, and a communication from him states that he will meet a representative from each organized county in Kansas at Wichita, on July 14, and instruct the farmers concerning the crops to be grown in 1892; also how to do away with the proposed fund for the World's Fair by each county paying the Professor thirty dollars, provided his scheme succeeds. Inquire for Prof. Swan on your arrival at Wichita.

JOHN F. SHIELDS,

Wholesale Broker.

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CHOICE HAY A SPECIALTY. [June 4 4m.

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BUSH'S PHARMACY,

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Finest Drug Emporium in Southern Kansas.

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TOILET ARTICLES, PERFUMERY, ETC.

All prescriptions filled by an experienced pharmacist. Mail orders will receive prompt attention.

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PIANOS, ORGANS,

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BEFORE BUYING WRITE US FOR PRICES.

Organs and Pianos Sold on Installment.

We trade Organs and Pianos for any kind of stock. Call on us when you want anything in our line. (June 4 4m) H. WELLAND.

LUMBER, -:- LUMBER,

Doors, Sash, Blinds. Cement,

Paints, Lime, Plaster Paris, Oils, Etc.

Estimates Furnished on Application.

R. L. SHARP, -:- -:- Chetopa, Kas.

(June 4 4m)

G. B. CLENDENNING, Chetopa, Kas.

DEALER IN

DRY GOODS, GROCERIES, BOOTS and SHOES, Etc.

PRODUCE OF ALL KINDS BOUGHT.

☞ We desire to say to the people of the Indian Territory that we can make it to their interest to trade with us. Come in and price our goods.

G. B. CLENDENNING,

[June 4m] CHETOPA, KANSAS.

Awful Wreck On The Frisco.

AT FAIRLAND,

IN PRICES, WE MEAN.

Three car loads of goods, consisting of

Dry Goods, Groceries,

Boots and Shoes,

Hats, Caps and Clothing,

Making a splendid and complete stock, have been put on the shelves in our store and will be sold at prices astonishingly low

WE ARE HERE to SELL GOODS,

And have got them, so come to see us for prices. We will not be undersold. Come in and see us and let us show you our goods and give you our prices.

LEE B. SMITH & SON.

NAT PERRY,

FAIRLAND, I. T.

Will sell you cheaper Farm Machinery than ever.

ALL KINDS OF

Plows, Harrows, Rod Breakers, Etc.

Agent for the McCORMICK REAPERS AND BINDERS. Try us before buying anything in the Hardware line. We don't propose to be outsold or insolled by any thing that wears hair, wool or feathers. Don't it?

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JAMES MUSKRAT, Afton, Indian Territory,

General Dealer in

Dry Goods, Groceries, Hats, Caps, Etc., Custom made Boots and Shoes.

ALLIANCE STORE.

I am selling goods only for cash or its equivalent and can give you the benefit of cash purchases. I keep always on hand Flour, Bacon, Lard, Etc. I buy Eggs, Chickens, Turkeys; in fact, everything. When you come to Afton don't buy until you get my prices.

JAMES MUSKRAT, Afton, Indian Territory.