

will reply to this exhibit of production and wealth: "Yes; but look at the mortgages and indebtedness." This is largely another popular delusion. Although a new country requiring vast investments for public improvements and private enterprise, yet, surprising as it may seem, the public and private debt is comparatively less than in the older states. In 1890, as appears from the census report, the per capita mortgage indebtedness of Kansas was \$170; Nebraska, \$126; Missouri, \$80; Iowa, \$104; Minnesota, \$152. Take the same number of states on the eastern border, and we have Connecticut, \$107; Massachusetts, \$144; New York, \$268; New Jersey, \$161; Pennsylvania, \$117.

If we consider the combined national, state and local bonded debt, the burden is much heavier in the East than in the West. The per capita interest charge of this combined debt in the West was 48 cents; in the New England states, including New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania it was, in 1890, \$1.78.

It may reasonably be inquired: "How is the civilization of the West manifest in educational results?" With commendable pride it may be answered that the pioneers and immigrants who have built up homes and sought fortunes toward the setting sun have not been thoughtless of the welfare of their children. They have remembered that the public schools are the safeguards of our institutions. The schoolhouse and the church adorn the hilltops and grace the valleys from the majestic Mississippi to the glistening waves of the Pacific. From official records we learn about 6,000,000 of pupils in this wide domain are in the public schools under 130,134 teachers, and in 1897 the expenditures on account of these schools amounted to \$50,470,671. With these are schools of higher instructions, academies, normal schools, colleges, and universities in every state and territory, liberally sustained and endowed.

The "Wild West" is being educated, and the comparisons in the census report are most gratifying. The average per cent of illiteracy in the New England states and including New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, nine states, in 1890 was 5.9 per cent. The average illiteracy of the nine most western states farthest removed from the refined and cultivated East, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Idaho, Washington, Oregon and California was 3.9 per cent of the population. The percentage of illiteracy in Ohio was 4.7 per cent; Indiana, 5.8; Illinois, 4.9. In Iowa it was 3.5; Kansas, 2.9; and in Nebraska, 2.8. It will be observed, and it is the glory of our whole country, civilization is marching on, until now, in the light of the wonderful events that have recently taken place, the prophecy of Thomas Benton is fulfilled: "The way to the East is from

the West." The Occident is bringing freedom and knowledge to the Orient.

True, the older states have bestowed upon the West a priceless baptismal gift, its fruits of knowledge, skill, industry, capital and manhood. This heritage has been gratefully received and cherished and now the valleys of the Mississippi, Missouri, the Rio Grande, Columbia, Sacramento and San Joaquin bloom like the famous vales of Cashmere. There is no longer any "Wild West." It is a memory!

AN OLD-TIMER.

The demolition of the old Kay house on lower Central avenue, by order of the city council, removes one of the few remaining monuments of those early days which are so recent, and yet already so far away. Dr. Kay's executor and life-long friend, Mr. Tom Thomas, states that the doctor bought this house in 1855, of A. M. Rose, who built it in the preceding year, before there were even any bridges over the creeks, and when the rival settlement of Kearney, on the other hill, could only be reached by means of the "stone ford" below the present B. & M. warehouse. He evidently selected the site with a view to its natural beauty, being an old-country man, with some of what are called the higher tastes. It stood just below the eastern edge of the plateau on which the block-house stood and which extended some 300 yards back to the edge of the forest; to the east there was a slope down to the river and steamboat landing, on the north was quite a ravine lying between the main hill and that now known as the Hayward hill; and the south face running down to Table creek, was probably much as at present.

One who took the trouble to step upon the vacant lots in the rear of the Morton House has hitherto been able to catch a view of something like the original condition of this tract, for while streets have been cut through below the natural level, the surface of the ground between has remained singularly undisturbed for about two blocks. He is standing on the soil of the old parade-ground itself, where the United States dragoons used to practice their martial exercises to the awe of the neighboring savages, and he is looking at the back-doors of some very old houses, just as they were first built. They have a very different appearance from the street, owing to the grading that has been done, and lower stories having been built in under some of them. There is the stone foundation of the old Kimmel grist-mill, and the place on the corner east of it where Peter Smith for a long time kept a meat-market; then comes the Kay house, small and low, but with a wing to the west, and a latticed arbor behind it, all suggesting that there were at one time people of taste living com-

fortably in it; and next stands the palatial residence that a rival physician built adjoining it, cutting off the doctor's view entirely, even from his little front porch.

The old doctor lived in his house until his death, in 1893. He made an eccentric figure on the streets in his latter days, with his tall form draped in a gaunt linen duster, always wearing a high white hat and carrying a cane; and he died in poverty. But though there was little in his dilapidated abode to suggest to the curious visitor that it had ever been the home of a cultivated man, there were a few small matters that the doctor had never found it convenient to part with; there was a battered and stringless violoncello, which reminded some callers of nights when they had "danced after that old fiddle" with feet lighter than at present, and on floors that had long ago gone up in smoke; and there were book shelves covering the side of one room, containing a library of the steamboat period; many medical works of the doctor's, and bound volumes of ladies' magazines of his wife's, containing light reading and fashion-plates of that funny old time; and an ancient Bible in Gaelic. The books were a good deal in the way, however, so the executor loaded them into a wagon one day and took them down and threw them off the bridge; and that was practically the end of Dr. Kay.

BALANCE OF POWER.

It is certain that the balance of political power in the United States rests with independent voters. They elected McKinley once, and because of his non-performance of promises on monetary reform they may be inclined to beat him once.

The distressing dilemma of the independent voter today is that he must choose between maladministration, mis-construction of official duties, misconception of official honesty and McKinley-ism, on one side, and all the blatant vagaries, vanities, crudities and fallacies of free-silverism, on the other.

Unless a new party be formed this dilemma may confront the independent voter in 1900. If so it will require great discrimination to determine the lesser of the two evils.

The democratic party was never successful when it masqueraded in other than democratic habiliments. When it has plainly proclaimed its principles and boldly declared against protective tariffs and for the gold standard it has won. Whenever it has dodged or run off after strange gods it has been defeated. Thus it will continue forever. Nothing but a recantation, renunciation and denunciation of the financial heresies of 1896 can save and restore democracy.