

party, which was not genuinely Republican in character, but an oligarchy allied with a mob; the people themselves have in some States been modifying it in a Conservative sense since the War by lengthening the terms for which the judges are elected and introducing the minority clause. But even in New York City these are not the days of Barnard and Cardozo, when anybody who belonged to the Ring might cut throats or purses with impunity. The BYSTANDER is no stranger to the United States; he has always taken pains to inform himself, as well as he could, on this most vital point; and it is his conviction that in the Northern and Western States, at all events, there is generally no want of respect for the judges or of confidence in the administration of the law. The judges, it is true, are not equal to those in England; they have not the same command of their courts, nor do they despatch business with so much promptitude; but the reason is that the salaries are comparatively small, and are insufficient as inducements to draw the most eminent men from the Bar.

There is, it must be owned, great difficulty in getting a murderer hanged. But this is not because the courts are bad; it is because the misguided philanthropy of the people is always interfering with the course of justice. Sentimental defences are weakly admitted, especially where there is a woman, or the shadow of a woman, in the case; an inordinate delay is interposed between sentence and execution; and reprieves are always sought on the stock plea of insanity, to which, in the case of one most diabolical miscreant, was added the plea that he had invented a universal language, and that it would be shameful to extinguish so great a light of science. The natural off-set to spurious mercy is irregular violence, and the disgraceful practice of lynching seems still to prevail. This, however, is almost exclusively in the wild West or in those old Slave States, where society retains the taint of an inhuman system and of the lawless ferocity which it engenders. Where lynching has taken place in an old Free State it has commonly been caused by the masterful strength of some invading gang and the weakness of the local police, thus testifying, though in a sinister way, to the generally law-abiding character of the people, which renders a strong police ordinarily needless.

A BYSTANDER.

TO CALGARY.

AFTER crossing the South Saskatchewan at Medicine Hat, the railroad runs along the watershed between two of its tributaries, the Bow and the Red Deer, the former being some twenty miles to the south of the line, and the latter fifty or sixty to the north. The whole country is beautiful, genuine prairie, great rolling expanses on each side appearing in endless succession—smoothed out at times into absolutely level plains, or broken here and there by knolls or "buttes." Sometimes the horizon is five or six miles distant, and an Indian on horseback galloping at full speed looks like part of the prairie or a speck crawling slowly along its surface. Elsewhere gentle undulations, swelling to a height of fifty or perhaps a hundred feet, contract the horizon, and the track runs in a long valley with easy slopes. The soil is much the same as that between the hills of the Missouri Coteau and Medicine Hat, good honest clay on which, if there be sufficient rainfall, anything can be grown. And there would seem to have been enough rain even last season. The prairie sod had been broken for the track between May and July, and yet oats that had been dropped from the horses' mouths or sown in other casual ways, had sprung up and promised a good crop. We could see, not merely at a few favoured spots but all along the line, from half a dozen to a score of strong succulent stocks stooling out from one root, with well filled heads on every stalk. "Father" and other well-known weeds of ours that are never found on the unbroken prairie, but seem to accompany man's advance into lone lands, were growing green and rank; and on the prairie the purple flowering sage, golden rod, marigolds, asters and roses, the characteristic flora in August of Manitoba and eastern Assiniboia, though not with the same wealth of vegetation. The herbage is short and scant, and its withered appearance makes it resemble Ontario autumn pastures, rather than the never failing green of the fertile belt. The grey is relieved by occasional green hay meadows that were shallow ponds in spring, and by deeper lakelets, on the shores of which snipe walk about unconcernedly. Geese are flying slowly round, offering tempting chances to sportsmen, and duck are everywhere. The prairie is seamed by the clearly defined narrow trails of the countless herds of buffalo that once made this country their home. They travelled in single files, heading for water by the most direct road. In days of old, for thus we now speak of yesterday, the buffalo was everything to the Indian—staff of life, clothing, leather and lumber, but to-day scattered skeletons and skulls, bleached white by successive fires, are the only traces of those countless thousands that once blackened the prairie, except the numerous trails

which look more like ancient furrows than anything else. The shores and bottoms of dried up ponds sometimes show a white crust of alkali instead of the usual rank marsh grass. To the traveller intent on present necessities, and to the ordinary settler, no sight is more hateful, though the amount of alkali in the soil is only what good farmers consider beneficial to put on their land in the shape of lime or phosphates. This view of the case does not strike a man who is tired and thirsty. When, after travelling for days without seeing a sign of running water, or for hours without a drink of any kind, he comes to a lake or "slew" and finds it bitter, he feels disposed to send the whole country to Coventry. The medicinal effect of even the drinkable water tempts sound teetotallers to carry flasks; but unless "permits" have been secured they know that these may be confiscated by the Mounted Police, and their owners heavily fined.

No man who has studied human nature or the history of sumptuary legislation will pin his faith to prohibitory enactments against the use of meats or drinks. Buddhism forbids its followers to drink any intoxicating liquor. So does Mahometanism. But I have yet to learn that either Buddhism or Mahometanism stands on ground as high as Christianity. Christianity is based not on hard and fast rules but on principles. It inculcates holiness, but at the same time calls us into liberty. Its fundamental principle, however, is love, and love teaches the individual to sacrifice his own tastes, pleasures and appetites for the good of others, and teaches a Christianized community that there are times and places when positive enactments that limit liberty are required for the general welfare. Almost every one who knows the condition of things in the North-West admits that prohibition there has been, and is a blessing. Contractors, ranche-men, Indian agents, missionaries and settlers unite in generally supporting the law, railway contractors in particular, for their men's sake and their work's sake. I met employers of labour who had been successively on the great Transcontinental railways, and they concurred in saying that nowhere had such good work been done as on the Canadian Pacific, and simply because the men could not get whiskey for love or money. There had been little or no sickness and little or no grumbling, in spite of the bad water and other inconveniences incident to life in the wilderness. Thousands of navvies, many of them lawless, and spendthrifts by nature and habit, accustomed to the free use of revolver and bowie knife, artists in the matter of profane swearing, had lived quiet, sober, industrious, cleanly lives, because whiskey and the usual pests that whiskey allures to camps had been kept out of the country. Not far from those masterful men in masses, at different points along the line, were thousands of Indians, the men with rifles, the women with little sense of shame, and to maintain order, a nominal police usually kept pretty busy by horse thieves and routine duty. The elements of Pandemonium have been in our North-West for the last two or three years, with one exception. Given whiskey, we should have had on a portentous scale murder, villainy, demoralization, all ending in Indian wars costing millions in money and far more in national disgrace. Indian policy requires a prohibitory law in the North-West. And the more intelligent settlers declare that they require it too for their own rank and file. "There!" said one gentleman, pointing to a cur, *sans ears, sans tail*, and with a most woe-begone and generally dilapidated appearance, "that brute, even with instinct to help, couldn't save himself from being frozen a little. What would have become of him if he had been full of whiskey? I can tell you, sir, a man in our winters needs all his senses to keep him from freezing."

In spite of the Mounted Police, some whiskey, always of the strongest kind, is smuggled in, and there is a general cry that the permit system is abused. But one duly licensed house would import more in a week than all that filters through in a year by these ways; and as long as there is only one railway into the heart of the country, the law can be fairly carried out, for a system of search is comparatively easy. Of course human ingenuity, especially when stimulated by hope of gain and the delight of evading the police, is full of resource and is certain to keep up a never-ending still beginning contest. The evening before we arrived at Maple Creek station, the officer had noticed a clerical-looking gentleman with suspiciously large valise stepping off the train. Politely insisting on the privilege of examination, spotless shirts appeared on the top and good literature in abundance, with other articles that every gentleman is supposed to require; but underneath, a fine assortment of bottles of brandy that had escaped the notice of the sergeant, who had examined on the train, Alas for the pedlar, who had perhaps invested his all in the venture! He had run the gauntlet of inspection safely inside the car, only to fall a victim to a monster, outside. His brandy, every bottle of which he had hoped to convert into half a dozen, was there and then spilled on the ground, in a convenient spot where some Crees, lounging about the station, could at any rate kneel down and smell it; and he himself, unable to pay the hun-