

UNITED STATES LEGISLATION.

At the annual meeting of the American Bar Association held at Boston, the President delivered the usual interesting opening address, in which he referred to the more important changes in the statute law of the Union and its various constituent States. So onerous does he find the task of a comprehensive and faithful research into the various "statutory" flights of the different States that he is driven to remark that no president of the Association can regret that he is ineligible for a second term; for, he says, the task involves "a review of a large part, perhaps the best part, of the history of the world since last we met, for where is history more truly written than in the legislation of the times, and what new field of legislation is entered upon in this age, in any quarter of the globe, that is not soon known and travelled in every other?"

He contrasts the requirements of the various States and territories, of which there are now forty-four of the former and six of the latter, "fifty distinct and for most purposes independent governments, each with a legislature expected and desirous to add something of value to the institutions of its people." "Something" each legislature undoubtedly does add, but not always of lasting "value."

The association has, by continued pressure brought to bear upon Congress, succeeded in having the salaries of the federal judiciary increased to some extent. It seems to have found that only a cheap article can be had at a low price, and therefore it prefers to make it more worth the while of the leading men at the bar to accept judicial positions. Here in Ontario, if we have been in any degree fortunate in procuring capable men to sit on the bench, is it not because the appointees think rather of the honor of the judicial position than of the meagre sum given them as compensation for assiduous and laborious work?

By a recent Act of Congress, owners of vessels are forbidden to advertise the advantages of the United States in order to procure passengers. This Act is the same one that has been so much canvassed of late in regard to its provision preventing the landing of those who cannot show that they will not be a charge on the public; and if they do so become a charge within a year, they will be sent back at the expense of the line that brought them. Recognizing the objection to the ocean mail service being controlled by Britain, Congress has authorized the subsidizing of mail steamers built in America.

The free exercise of the electoral franchise is ever before the citizen of the United States; consequently we find that within a year fifteen additional States have adopted the so-called Australian ballot system, making twenty-nine in all where it is in vogue.

Municipal affairs are not overlooked. Should any ten freeholders of the city of Cleveland so desire, an inspection without notice may be had of the affairs of any municipal department or officer, by three citizens to be appointed by the probate judge, and the result of their investigation is laid before the council at its next meeting. What a *furor* would be created if this were done in some cities we know—one, indeed, not far from our editorial chair. Does not Cleveland set us an example of a desire for a municipal purity which does not seem to pervade our Canadian cities to any very great extent?