

Janey Canuck in the West

It is true that, in the earlier days, whisky was traded for furs, and a carnival of crime followed. The fort was surrounded by a high, wooden palisade, mounted by bastions in which were stationed brass cannon. Although only stumps of the palisades are now standing, bullets may still be extracted from them, showing there were stormy times in and around the Company's stronghold. It was only when the officials saw their lode was likely to be worked out by allowing the Indians to become degraded and impoverished, that they cut off the supply of what to this day is known as "hell in a half-pint."

These carousals are frequently and strenuously denied in these days of local option, but the very old-timers still talk about them.

A little newspaper published thirty years ago by the Hon. Frank Oliver, the present Minister of the Interior, brings the scenes vividly before us. It is an old, brown paper, six inches long by five inches wide. It was printed on a hand-press that had been carried here twelve hundred miles overland, and was the most northerly press on the continent.

Mr. Oliver was writing of the advent of the Mounted Police and of the beneficial changes they had wrought in the territory.

"In no country in the world," he said, "did whisky form a greater portion of the whole trade; in no country were the evil effects resulting from that trade greater; in no country were there more powerful interests or stronger prejudices to be united in its support, and in no country could the enforcing of the law be attended with greater difficulties than in this region of illimitable distances and sparse population. The state of the country only a few years ago, when the whisky trade was in full blast, was so deplorable, so utterly different from its present