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CRIME

The Wild West is Now in Chicago

***One hundred and fifty murders in ten months is the record.
Roulette is said to be played for as big stakes as at Monte Carlo.***

Canada never had a Wild West. Largely, perhaps, because as soon as anyone came over from across the border and started to Wild West around, the North-West Mounted Police very quietly and firmly put him away where he wouldn't harm any one.

Now the States had a Wild West. It was as good as the movies portray. It had faro, dice, wide-open towns, bad Injuns, red eye, gamblers in frock coats, Bill Hart bad men, discriminate and indiscriminate killings, and all the jolly features.

In place of the Redskins biting the dust it is now the commercial traveler that bites the dust.

Where the elk once roamed, the Elk now roams, but with him are the Mason and Odd Fellow. Thus, to coin a phrase, the old order passeth, giving way to the new.

But the Wild West hasn't disappeared. It has only moved. Just at present it is located at the southwestern end of Lake Michigan, and the range that the bad men ride is that enormous smoky jungle of buildings they call Chicago.

Every year some Congressman or Senator rises in the U.S. Congress and reports that during the past year thirty-two or twenty-seven American citizens have been killed in Mexico. All the Congressmen shudder as one Congressman. Mexico is obviously a bad place. "Something must be done about it. It can't go on any longer. Steps must be taken."

Yet in the city of Chicago during the present year from January to November there have been one hundred and fifty killings. One hundred and fifty murders in ten months means a murder every forty-eight hours.

Of course that record may not look so good against the score of some of the early Nevada mining towns where they boasted to kill a man for breakfast every morning. Some of the Nevada breakfasts, though, must have been furnished by sheriffs and marshals ushering out bad men.

In the Chicago figures, however, no count has been made of the killings by police. By including the police bag, it would be pretty safe to say they kill somebody every day in Chicago.

Chicago is supposed to be a dry town. But anybody willing to pay twenty dollars a quart for whiskey can get all they want. In the first days of the dry law enforcement much of this contraband whiskey was Canadian. The dealers feared to move the enormous stores of whiskey there are in the South.

Now most of the whiskey you buy has a Kentucky label. Canadian whiskey costs too much and there is too much American liquor on hand.

Gambling is flourishing again after a temporary retirement. Of course in every city there will always be certain types of gambling that can go on in spite of all the police can do. Those

are the games that require no apparatus, but can be conducted anywhere. When the police raid a crap game, for instance, all that the gamblers must do is have the doors hold long enough for them to sweep the money into the buckskin bag that lies flat open on the billiard table, throw the dice out of the window, and the evidence is missing.

Roulette wheels in operation mean only one thing, police protection. For you can't hide a roulette wheel and you can't throw it out of the window. It is expensive, bulky and heavy. Before a gambling joint decides to put a wheel into operation they must know that they will not be raided without a proper warning to give them time to stow away their equipment.

At present it is common talk that there is in Chicago on the West Side a gambling house where roulette is played for as big stakes as obtain in Monte Carlo. So there is murder, drink and gambling in the new Wild West just as in the old.

Now the reason that Chicago is crime-ridden and Toronto is not lies in the police forces of the two cities. Toronto has a force that for organization, effectiveness and esprit de corps is excelled nowhere in the world. Crooks steer clear of Toronto because they know the reputation of that force. It has established the same reputation for a city that the North-West Mounted Police did for a Dominion.

Chicago's crime record is the best description of her police force. Even if you escape all the various brands of criminal homicide that Chicago offers, the nightgowny person with the scythe has another sickle up his wide-flowing sleeve. There have been to date four hundred and twenty people killed this year in Chicago by motor cars.