day to the readers of the papers. But this particular episode had one rather unusual feature connected with it—a woman was one of the victims of the mob who took the law into their own hands and assumed the role of executioners without the preliminaries of trial and conviction. These essentials of civilized procedure are going out of fashion, and it is useless to ignore the fact that a gradual return to barbaric methods is in progress. This hanging of a woman is a sad commentary upon the supposed gallantry of the cowboy. The whole transaction was a deed of horror, but the frequent occurrence of acts of summary vengeance wreaked by the hands of mobs renders them familiar, and they have come to be taken as matters of course. Thus the popular conscience becomes gradually dulled. Events that would have horrified communities a few years ago are now regarded as almost too common for ordinary consideration. This is a bad sign.

The reason assigned for the action of the mob, or the apology offered for their conduct, ought to be startling to a civilized people. We do not refer now to the crime of cattle stealing, of which Averill and his female companion were alleged to be guilty. The excuse for the doings of the lynchers was that they had no hope of these unsavory persons receiving their deserts at the hands of the law. This hopeless feature was superinduced by the fact that out of a large number of trials for cattle stealing in the county where the tragedy was enacted, not one conviction had ensued.

These failures to convict were not attributable to the attitude of the officials of the courts, but to the condition of the juries, who were afraid to render verdicts of guilty. This is presumed to be the situation in a good many parts of the country. This being the case, here is anarchy which does not come from its professed votaries. It is as dangerous as if it emanated from the avowed enemies of society. Its constituents are (1st), Failure of the courts to punish crime; (2nd), This failure proceeds from the terrorizing influence of the criminal class over peaceable citizens; (3rd), These two causes lead to another class of people discarding all semblance of law and executing vengeance upon alleged criminals with their own hands.

These conditions prevail in many portions of the nation. If they were to become universal anarchy, social chaos would be the result. That this situation is increasing in area is beyond question. This being admitted, another logical interrogatory ensues—What rate of progress in this direction would throw the country into confusion in a given time?

BAD LAWS IN FORCE.

It looks like getting back to the old Puritanical period of New England to prosecute a woman for being a "common scold," yet that is what was done at Jersey City, N. J., the other day. The defendant in the case was Mrs. Mary Brady She was indicted upon the complaint of a neighbor. The witnesses who appeared before the grand jury all testified that Mrs. Brady had a "voluble and noisy tongue," and by means of its intemperate and continuous use, had disturbed the peace and quiet of the neighborhood, and she was a public nuisance.

The trial was an interesting proceeding. As would be supposed, the court room was crowded. The evidence for the prosecution was all direct and certain and there was a good deal of it, several of the defendant's neighbors being called as witnesses. It all bore strongly upon the unfortunate woman, whose defense was rather weak and consisted mainly of a general denial by herself and her husband and one or two colored persons. The jury were out only a few minutes and returned with a verdict of guilty. She was remanded for sentence.

Under the "blue laws," the punishment of this offense was a certain number of "dips" with a contrivance known as the ducking stool. It consisted of a long beam extending some distance over a pond, being supported near the centre by an upright; to the outer end a chair was fastened and in this the candidate for immersion was placed; she was then lowered into the water as many times as the sentence called for. This was considered beneficial in several ways—it upheld the majesty of the law, was a terrible warning to others, it cooled the victim's distempered blood, and provided her with an effective bath, all in one operation. With the advance of civilization all this is no more, and in its stead we—or at least the people of New Jersey—have created a law which changes the punishment to imprisonment not exceeding two years or a fine in the discretion of the court. In other words, for using the weapon which nature gave her for her own benefit (and other people's discomfiture at times), we cannot endure to be so unenlightened and uncivil as to go back to the penalty of a hundred years or more ago, so we just inflict the same punishment that we do in cases of burglary, sheep-stealing and the like! A queer sort of advancement, rather.

In Utah, in all the Territories, and we believe in all the States outside of the northwest corner, there is no such statute as the one referred to in New Jersey. If there were any such it would only be smiled at; the justice of the peace or other officer who would attempt to enforce it would became a laughing stock. The better sentiment and feelings of man would not tolerate it, any more than they would tolerate the ducking stool itself. We have a general law in relation to disturbances of the peace, the extreme penalty in any case being only one-fourth of what the New Jersey law provides, and ours goes far enough. It was intended to be broad enough to reach a class of cases which nearly amount to a specific offense of a higher class but do not, and to be used against chronic offenders. It is hardly ever used to frame an indictment upon, when there are offenses against it, not being considered serious enough to justify the attention of a grand jury; a justice of the peace can usually try such a case in a few minutes, and if the defendant is found guilty, a fine of a few dollars is imposed, nothing more. And all courts are supposed to relax the rule when the defendant is a woman, more particularly if her offense is giving way to a natural infirmity.

Delaware is also in the category of commonwealths whose criminal laws are not in all respects abreast with the civilization and enlightenment of the age. It retains the barbarous whipping post as a method of punishment for a certain class of cases, and no distinction is allowed on account of sex. To make it as bad as possible the whipping is done in public, in a place where all can see well, the culprit is stripped and the lashes are laid on the bare back with a stalwart arm. It is singular that sufficient pressure cannot be exerted from all around to effect a repeal of such barbarities.

TWO CASES COLLAPSE.

The Chicago *Times* was enterprising and persistent enough to unearth the gross abuses perpetrated in the Cook County insane asylum.