

LOOK OUT FOR KNAVES.

A Southern gentleman walking in Vesey st. New York, a few nights ago was checked by a fellow stumbling against him, pretending to pick up something at his feet, and then running off, while another gentleman accosted him, "That fellow has got your pocket-book! I saw him pick it up! Let's overhaul him!" The gentleman felt for his pocket-book, which he found safe, and saw at once that the affair was got up with intent to swindle him, but he thought he would look farther into it, and followed. His impromptu friend called loudly to the fugitive to stop. The latter held up the pocket-book which it was pretended he had found, exposing a thick roll of what appeared to be Bank bills, and said, (still keeping away,) "I won't have my honesty disputed for nothing—give me ten dollars and take the pocket-book." The friend advised the stranger to give it, and take the pocket-book, saying "It is yours; I saw you drop it." The Southern gentleman had by this time looked far enough into the matter to understand it perfectly, and being a small man, and unable to discover any Watchman, he just told the two confederates what he thought of them, and went his way. This is one of several such occurrences which have been reported to us. Strangers to the ways of a city should be on their guard for all sorts of roguery.

THE POWER OF POLITENESS.

Mrs. Cassimer Bejour, in an essay on politeness, relates this anecdote: "The Marchioness de Coislin one day solicited an audience of Fouché, then Minister of Police. The audience was granted, but Fouché who was resolved to refuse whatever the Marchioness might ask for, received her standing, with his elbow resting on the chimney-piece, and did not invite her to a seat. "Citizen Minister said the Marchioness, "I come to ask what crime my sister, M. d'Avary, has committed, that she should be exiled!" "She is an enemy of the Government," replied Fouché, "and has the audacity to set it at defiance." She audacious!" retorted the Marchioness, "she defy the first Consul! How little you know her! She is so timid that she would not even venture to say, "Citizen Minister, have the goodness to hand me a chair." At these words Fouché was so disconcerted that he lost all his courage to be hostile; Madame de Coislin had a chair, and Madame d'Avary received permission to return to Paris."

The justly celebrated Lessing was frequently very absent. Having missed money at different times without being able to discover who took it, he determined to put the honesty of his servant to trial, and let a handful of gold on his table. "Of course you contend it," said one of his friends. "Counted it," said Lessing, rather embarrassed, "no I forgot that."

It will appear from the following, that there has been a fearful loss of life in France, by an avalanche, similar to that which has lately occurred at Troy, New York:

Dreadful Avalanche in France.—The Courier de l'Estre gives the following additional details of the overwhelming of the great part of the village of Valcentro. The avalanche after reaching the foot of the mountain, was carried over a space of several hundred yards, by its own impetus, before it could reach the village, and then covered it with snow and timber, and pieces of rock, borne down with it in its course, to the depth of from twenty to thirty feet, burying eighty-two persons beneath its weight. Of these seventy-two have been dug out unhurt, but the ten others perished.—To accomplish their release apertures were made over the chimneys of the houses, and through them the living were drawn up; but the dead were not reached until transversal cuttings could be made. Several animals were also saved alive. The avalanche made so little noise in falling that the inhabitants who did not suffer from it, were not aware of the disaster till seven the next morning, three hours after it happened; and even those who were caught by it, believed it to be only a heavy fall of snow that had crushed their roofs, and, stopping up their doors and windows, waited patiently till day, expected their neighbors to come to their rescue.

THE COMET.

Does not the appearance of the Comet—with its fiery tail blazing upward the heavens—bursting upon us unannounced, unheralded—does it not, we ask, portend the fulfillment of Miller's predictions? There is something about it supernatural and startling.—Would it not be well for some people to look about them, and see if they are prepared to meet this Comet face to face. At all events, we would advise Sam Medley to settle for those quack quires, and to stop! No harm would come of it, if the Comet should not pay us a closer visit. (Ohio State Journal.)

A Court Martial was recently held at Fort Johnson Smithville, N. C., which adjourned on the 22d ult. It was ordered for the trial of Lieut. Fremont for "illegal and unumitary conduct," the chief specification being that he caused three privates to be whipped. The finding of the court has not been promulgated, but the Wilmington Chronicle thinks it will justify Lieut. Fremont, the company in which the flogging took place being at the time in a state of insubordination as to require it.

DISCOVERY OF THE ISLAND OF BACCHUS.

This island, though remarkable in its character, and vast domains, had never been discovered until within the last few years. It is bounded on the East by the Territory of Folly and Deceit; on the North by the regions of Poverty and distress; on the south by the burning zone of Remorse, Disease and Death; and on the West by the Dead Lake of Oblivion, its atmosphere is gloomy enervating and pestiferous, exposed to the perpetual scenes of storms, hurricanes, and tempest and its climate like the mind of its inhabitants is never settled for an hour. Its seasons also uncertain, & subject to most destructive changes. The spring for instance is a season of most pernicious feal in which the generality of its inhabitants are possessed with a kind of madness the most destructive to themselves, most injurious to their neighbors and the most subversive of unguarded innocence. The summer is a season of incessant toil in he ingathering of the fruits of dissipation and debauch. Its autumnal scenes are generally heartrending like a blighted forest disordered of all its beauty and grandeur by the frosts of night; so here all that is virtuous or excellent may be seen stripped of its inherent loveliness. Its winters are truly despicable: nothing but one unbroken scene of devastation and misery now presents itself to the eye of the beholder and not a countenance but is shrouded in saddest and despair.

Its principle Commodities are rum, brandy, gin, whiskey, wine, and malt liquors. Its products are poverty misery, wretchedness and distress. The only wild beasts that inhabit this miserable island are imaginary, usually found on the mountains of Delirium Tremens, from whose terrific heights may be seen the principle river, which is the stream of Death, upon his rolling billows the natives are carried along in quick succession to ward the Dead Lake of Oblivion.

HENRY CLAY AND THE LADIES.

The Concordia, Intelligencer tells the following anecdote of Mr. Clay at the late Agricultural Fair at Baton Rouge:

Making our way near him we were stopped for a time by the dense mass surrounding him, and were thus so fortunate as to witness a little incident which may prove interesting to our readers.

A lady standing near us was introduced to Mr. Clay, after the usual salutations, she observed, "well Mr. Clay, I am a very warm friend of yours, so much so indeed, sir, that I would willingly agree to have the fever and ague six months to send you in the Presidential Chair." We thought for moment that this overwhelming compliment would take Mr. C. aback, but bowing for an instant and returning his thanks, he replied, "My dear madam, you bring to mind an anecdote told me by a friend from Washington, who informed me that during Lord Morpeth's visit there, he, Lord M. took occasion to call on a couple of young ladies, warm friends of mine; after the visit one of them observed, "Well, A—, why would you take to kiss that ugly mouth of Lord Morpeth's, which, by the bye, said Mr. C. is far uglier than mine, which, I presume, none of you will pronounce handsome;" "nothing," said Miss A—, "nothing on earth could induce me." The other hesitated a moment, and observed, would you not, could it ensure the election of Mr. Clay. She thought for an instant, and jumping from her seat, replied, yes I'd go it."

ELECTRO-MAGNETIC GILDING.

This caption forms the name of a new and useful art now being carried into successful practice in Baltimore and elsewhere. The plan is said to be very plain and simple, consisting, blinding and gilding evenly and handsomely, at any shade of coloring desired, at less than one-third of the cost by any other process yet known. A Baltimore contemporary, in speaking of it, says he saw an old pair of candlesticks made to resemble, in a short time, their brightest days; so of a castor, snuff and tray, &c. This must prove an invention of great utility, for we often see household articles only fit to be thrown away, yet quite good in all respects save that the gilding is worn off.

We understand that Mr. J. J. Upchurch of this city has a machine for silvering and gilding, which he calls electro-type gilding and silvering.

MESMERISM.

Some curious philosophical facts in relation to Mesmerism are stated by a writer in St. Louis who advocates the truth of the science. He asserts that "a steel needle plunged into a nerve becomes a magnet. Organic animal substances make efficient galvanic piles, without the use of metals; and in every breath we draw, electricity is generated by the union of oxygen and carbon. Chemical action is the chief source of electricity in the human system," &c., &c.

The Millerites are all killing themselves off in advance, and we suppose every one who gets out of the way now considers himself a brand snatched from the burning!

SPEECH OF MR. RAYNER,

OF NORTH CAROLINA,

On the bill proposing to repeal the Bankrupt Law, Delivered in the House of Representatives, Jan. 12, 1843.

MR. RAYNER, said he wished to state, briefly, the reasons which would induce him to vote for the repeal of the bankrupt law—provided the bill before the House could be put in a proper shape. I voted said (Mr. R.) for the bankrupt law, at the extra session, with some misgivings; but upon reflection, I then yielded my doubts, to the strong convictions and earnest entreaties of those who, representing commercial sections of the country, urged with so much zeal the passage of the law. It was a question on which I was able to look with an unprejudiced and impartial eye. Although my own State suffered in common with every other part of the Union, from the financial and pecuniary embarrassments of the Government and the country, yet there was, perhaps, no State that suffered less—owing in part, to the prudent and economical habits of its people, and in part to the fact that, in consequence of the natural obstructions on its eastern coast, it is less commercial in its pursuits than any other Atlantic State. It was, therefore, a question on which the people of my section of the Union felt comparatively indifferent. I felt a perfect liberty to pursue such a course as in my judgment I might think proper—untrammeled by public opinion at home. Although I saw no pressing necessity for the passage of this law, so far as the people of my own State, and especially my own immediate constituents, were concerned, yet I could not shut my eyes to the embarrassment, insolvency, and distress that were preying on all the trading and commercial sections of the country—depressing credit, crippling the energies of industry, tying up the hands of enterprise; and all these, in their results, seriously affecting and reacting on agriculture, manufactures, and every other department of business.

When I came to look at the causes of this embarrassment and distress, I saw plainly that the sufferers were not paying the penalty of their own imprudence and folly, but that they had been brought to insolvency and impending ruin, by the rash and wicked measures of financial quacks and political gamblers. When Locofoco misrule commenced, it found the country peaceful and quiet and every department of business pursuing a successful career of prosperity and wealth—Men of business relied on the patriotic conviction, that those who administered the Government would confine themselves to their constitutional functions; and they waked from this dream to find that financial tinkering had unhinged every branch of business, and deranged all their calculations—founded, as those calculations were, on the presumption that Government would not interfere with the pursuits of the citizen. The last administration, instead of profiting by the experience of the past, continued to persevere in this ruinous and oppressive policy—making war upon credit, whilst living on credit itself; experimenting with the currency; and acting on the principle laid down by its chief, that the only business of the Federal Government was to take care of itself, regardless of its effect on the pursuits of industry. At length the crisis, so long predicted by sagacious statesmen, came. The most cautious were unable to provide against it; whilst thousands who had been instigated by the inducements of the Jackson paper money era to embark in speculating adventures, were, owing to the reaction produced by the measures of the Van Buren specie-currency era, swept away by the sudden crash. Thousands were not only left insolvent, but unable to obtain employment to subsist, much less to pay their debts, whilst thousands of wives, who had been enjoying a life of luxury, were suddenly consigned to poverty; and thousands of children, who had been rocked in the cradle of plenty, were brought to cry for bread. Such is but a faint description of the sufferings and condition of the commercial community, when the bankrupt law was passed.

It was this state of distress, growing out of twelve years of misrule, which aroused the nation in 1840, and in a very great measure contributed to the overthrow of the self-styled democratic party. The Whig party came into power pledged to relieve the country as far as was in their power. The People expected it at their hands. And when they came to look around them, to those who asked and required relief at their hands, they saw that they were not the misers who had hoarded their gold; they were not the wealthy capitalists who had looked with calm complacency on and reaped a profitable harvest from the sufferings and misfortunes of others—but they were the enterprising and industrious—those who had used their means in giving labor and employment to thousands, and in advancing the trade, the credit, and the improvements of the country in all its great leading interests—who had thus been ruthlessly and expectorily reduced to want. The Whigs, then, considered it not only their duty, but an injunction imposed on them by the people who had entrusted them with power, to release a suffering community from the

thralldom into which they had been plunged by wicked and incompetent rulers.—They found the hands of industry and enterprise tied up, not in consequence of imprudence and extravagance, but by the action of the Federal administration; and it was necessary to sever these bonds in order to enable prosperity and improvement to pursue their onward march. They considered this indispensable to the commencement of a salutary reform. And now, for once and for all, I wish it to be distinctly understood, that we may set ourselves right in this subject—let those who so much denounce the bankrupt law—let this House and the country recollect, that, objectionable as this law may have been, it was forced upon us by Democratic misrule. But for the weakness and corruption of the last and preceding administrations, there would have been no pressing necessity for their passing such a measure. And let those who are disposed to cast censure on it, not blame those who passed it—who, if they did err, erred from the good intention to relieve honest suffering—from a proper regard for the wants and distress of an injured people—but on those, whose misrule forced it upon us; whose mismanagement and imbecility for years left us no other alternative.

I have briefly stated the reasons which induced me, in the first instance, to yield my doubts as to the propriety of passing such a law, to the pressing emergencies of the times. I will now briefly state the reasons why I shall vote for its repeal.

I have said I voted for this law with some misgivings. I thought I saw then, objections to any bankrupt law; but, on reflection, I considered these objections far outweighed by the suffering and embarrassment to the country, brought about by the mismanagement of the Government, which the Whigs had come into power pledged to reform. And since the same causes which induced the passage of the law no longer exist, at all events much less forcibly, the question may well arise, whether a pressing necessity any longer appears for keeping it in operation? The purposes intended by its passage have, in a very great measure, been accomplished. Those who had been plunged into insolvency, from which they could never have relieved themselves, have received its benefits, or, at all events, have had an opportunity of receiving them. If they have failed to do so, it has been the result of their own imprudence; their want of caution in stretching their credit too far in these pressing and unreliable times; or of relying too incautiously on the consistency of legislation in a Government, which events should have caused them to distrust. The prudent and industrious have had time and opportunity to avail themselves of its aid. Those whose enterprise and energy were cramped and destroyed by the ruinous consequences of Federal mismanagement, are left free once more to pursue the paths of industry and wealth. The manacles have been struck from their hands, and the heavy incumbrances of debt under which they labored have been removed. The mechanic has again been sent to his shop, the sailor to his ship, the agriculturist to his field, and the merchant to his counter. The road to prosperity and happiness has been cleared of the obstructions, with which Federal misrule has blocked it up, and again presents its beaten track; along which the prudent and industrious may travel, with renewed energy and dearly bought experience. The honest again have a field in which to labor, from the profits of which to pay their debts—which honor has not cancelled, although the law might have done so—debts which they never could have paid, as long as they were subject to the severity and extortion of unrelenting creditors. And many a wife and child, who saw nothing but poverty and want before them, have had their sorrow changed to consolation, by the hopes and prospects of better times.

And whilst the honest and unfortunate, who were willing to surrender all, have been relieved, the dishonest and reckless have been brought to accountability and liquidation. The creditor as well as the debtor has enjoyed its benefits, and while the former has extorted the last cent, he has been prevented from carrying his oppression further. The law has provided a means, by which the honest debtor may be enabled to timely pay his bond, without allowing the creditor to exact its forfeit.

If I am asked why the embarrassment and pressure which now pervade the country have not disappeared in consequence of the benefits of the bankrupt law which I have enumerated, my answer is, that the causes of these difficulties lie much deeper than in debt and insolvency. They spring from the derangement of the currency, and the uncertain and unsettled state of the finances of the Government. These the bankrupt law can not remedy, although it has remedied some of the evils growing out of them. And since the unfortunate have been relieved by the beneficial operation of the bankrupt law, from those overwhelming and unforeseen disasters resulting from the Democratic tinkering with the currency and finances, a return to a safe and sound system of currency and exchanges would soon enhance the price of property, and afford such aids to industry and business, as would soon restore

the country to prosperity, and thousands to solvency who are now unable to pay their debts. As to the pressure and embarrassments which now weigh upon the country, they never can be relieved till there is a change of measures and men.—We thought we had effected that change, and that our measures were about to carry "healing on their wings" to the wounds of a bleeding country; but, in the very moment of victory, the laurel was snatched from our brows by the most shameful treachery that every disgraced the annals of representative government. As long as we have an Executive who, in the weakness and vanity of power, flinched by fraud from a conflicting people, laughs at the distresses of his suffering countrymen; as long as the recognized organs of those who administer the Government come into this Hall and hawk the spoils of office to the highest bidder; as long as Executive vetoes are threatened in advance, not as the means of arresting unconstitutional legislation, but of eliciting recruits, for partisan service—so long will credit and confidence continue to languish, and the country continue to groan under embarrassing and debt.

Notwithstanding the benefits which I have mentioned, as having resulted from the bankrupt law, yet there are objections and evils attending it, as there are attending every finite system, every human invention. Although these objections were more than counterbalanced, at the time of the passage of the law, by the considerations I have alluded to, yet, as these considerations no longer exist—at all events in nothing like as full force—I incline to the opinion, that the inherent evils of the system, together with the state of the public mind, are such, as no longer to create a necessity for its continuance. In the first place I fear, it is calculated to affect personal confidence, which, after all, is the secret of our unparalleled prosperity in this country. It is calculated to beget, and I fear is already begetting, a disregard for the sacredness of obligations, without which no well established system of credit can exist in any country. For it is not the compulsory process of the law, which enables the young man, whose only fortune is his good name, to obtain credit with the rich, but it is the sanctity with which public opinion regards an obligation thus incurred. And any system which has a tendency to destroy this confidence; or beget a disregard for a faithful compliance with its conditions, is well calculated to lock up the coffers of the rich, to keep capital unemployed; and consequently to repress the energies of the enterprising and industrious, by depriving them of the opportunities and means of exertion. It may be said that this will affect only the imprudent and the faithless; but that those who deserve confidence and credit will still be able to obtain them. Then the question will arise, Who are to be trusted? Who can withstand the temptation, when the chances of being absolved from his obligations are so ready at hand? Who will rely upon the labor and perseverance of years to relieve him from the pressure of debts he cannot pay, when the tribunals of the country are so easy of access?

If, however, this should not be the result—if the means of obtaining credit be not thus taken away, and confidence not be destroyed, as I have supposed, then it must be admitted that the bankrupt law will tend to the opposite extreme. It will open the door for rash speculation and heedless adventure, which will unsettle and disturb the quiet and peaceful pursuits of life. It is the sense of responsibility, the fear of irretrievable ruin, that prevents most men from embarking in hazardous enterprises of trade, and compels them to pursue the slow and more certain ends of industry and economy. Take away these restraints—hold out to them the dazzling temptation of speedy wealth by hazardous speculation—offer to them the lure of such easy relief from accountability, and the penalties accompanying it—and what will be its effect upon a people so enterprising and adventurous as ours? Men will cease laboring with their hands, and attempt to live by their wits; speculation will run riot through the land; and the sober avocations of industry be abandoned for the reckless pursuits of instant gain. Habits of idleness and extravagance will thus be contracted, the public morals become corrupted, the public mind familiarized with the idea of discharging obligations, other than by the means of honest industry; and debt ultimately lose all its terrors for those who have every thing to gain, and nothing to lose by it.

Another serious objection to the bankrupt law is, that it comes in conflict with, and unsettles and disturbs the various insolvent laws which the respective States of the Union have adopted for the regulation of their internal police. All the States have established the relations of debtor and creditor, in accordance with the peculiar opinions of each. This is a most important subject of legislation, which varies in every State according to the peculiar interests and pursuits of its people. It is indispensable to good government and domestic prosperity, that these relations of debtor and creditor should be clearly defined, and settled on a firm and stable basis; for they are more or less interwoven with the whole system of juris-

prudence in every State of the Union.—Any general system, therefore, which comes in conflict with these various regulations in the respective States, must, in a measure, disturb their whole system of internal policy; justle against the peculiar habits and habits of their people; and thus be the means of perpetrating annoyance and vexation. It is the policy of some of the States that a very enlarged and liberal system of credit should prevail, that every stimulus should be given to enterprise and adventure; of others, that these should be restrained within more moderate limits. Some States may deem it their policy to visit the severest penalties on a failure to discharge liabilities incurred; others may consider it the part of humanity, to extend a much greater degree of lenity to the unfortunate debtor. Some States are commercial; some manufacturing; some agricultural. Experience may have proven that these various interests require different relations of debtor and creditor, in order to their successful pursuit. When we reflect that debts and liabilities in every State have been contracted with a view to the domestic policy and regulations of each, so far as the rights of the creditor and the responsibility of the debtor are concerned, it should be a most impetuous case of necessity, which should induce the General Government to interpose and disturb these various regulations, even temporarily, for the removal of an overwhelming evil—such an evil as did exist when the bankrupt law was passed, and which it was intended to remedy. And, owing to the causes I have mentioned, I doubt very much, whether, under any circumstances, a uniform bankrupt law ever should become a permanent part of our system of national jurisprudence.

There is another reason—a strong reason, too—which will induce me to vote for the repeal of the bankrupt law. I believe that public opinion has pronounced against its further existence; and that this fact cannot be disguised. The large and commercial cities may perhaps still be in favor of it; but as to the great mass of the people throughout the country, I am compelled to think that there is a decided majority against it. Of course, I can speak of my own knowledge only so far as the people of my own State and district are concerned; and there is perhaps no people, whose opinions present a fairer test of the unprejudiced decision of the public mind. They cared comparatively little about the passage of the law at first and have therefore been the better able to watch its operation with an impartial eye. And although I feel sure the large Whig majority in my State will appreciate and sanction the motives of those who passed it, yet, since the great good contemplated has been mainly accomplished; I have no little doubt that a majority of the people of the State, and of my own constituents, wish its repeal. From the best information I can obtain I am led to believe that the same state of feeling and opinion generally prevail in other sections of the Union. I wish to be distinctly understood on this point. I am not one of those who believe that legislation here should be swayed by the temporary impulses of popular feeling. I believe that it is the duty of the Representative to array himself against the effervescent violence of the public mind, when stimulated and excited by the reckless spirit of faction and innovation. As long as I am a Representative, I trust I shall have firmness enough to resist the demands of temporary impulse in the popular mind; when in my deliberate judgment I believe them to be wrong. But then, on the other hand, I do believe that the theory of our institutions is based on the principle, that the wishes of the constituency, dispassionately entertained and calmly expressed, are binding on the Representative, on questions of mere expediency. Whether the popular opinion is the result of impulse, or of cool and deliberate judgment, the Representative must judge. It is enough for me to say, that I do believe the calm and reflective judgment of a majority of my constituents is against the further continuance in operation of the bankrupt law.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not to be understood as expressing any regret for the vote which I originally gave for the passage of this law. Under similar circumstances, I should feel it my duty to do so again. I yielded to the great and urgent necessities of the country, and the sufferings of the people. Great as may have been the evils of a bankrupt law, yet I considered it called for by the extraordinary emergencies of the times. I thought it best to submit to one evil, in order to cure one still greater. Powerful and sickening as this medicine may have been, yet I thought it was called for as an extreme remedy for this distempered state of the nation.

Whilst I am willing to vote for the repeal of the bankrupt law; however, I cannot vote for the bill before the House, unless it is amended. The bill proposes to date back its operation to the 31st of December last, so as to exclude from its benefits, all those who had not then taken the preventive measures towards taking advantage of its provisions. Now this appears to me to be somewhat retrospective, at least negatively, if not positively. It is positively retrospective in its operation, it is so