EASTERN-SHORE WHIG AND PEOPLE'S ADVOCATE.

"THE PRICE OF LIBERTY IS PERPETUAL VIGILANCE."

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POETRY.

From the Washington Metropolis.

JOE RITNER'S LAMENT.

AIR—"*Roy's Wife of Aldivalloch.*"

Biddle's Bank of Pennsylvania—
Biddle's Bank of Pennsylvania—
Wot ye how it cheated me,
When last it promised to sustain me?
It vowed *the office* should be mine,—
It said I'd serve it best of any:
But, oh! the faithless, powerless thing,
It has left me now without a penny.
Biddle's Bank of Pennsylvania, &c

Its "yellow boys" so bright and clear—
Its wee bit "rags" so sleek and bonny—
To me they ever will be dear,
And all beside that *Nick* calls money.
Biddle's Bank of Pennsylvania, &c.

But Biddle's Bank has long to live,
And I am yet quite smart and showy,
And may be yet, *if it should* thrive,
It may do something for its *Joey*.
Biddle's Bank of Pennsylvania—
Biddle's Bank of Pennsylvania—
Wot ye how it cheated me
When first it promised to sustain me.

PLOOTZ.

From the February Number of the Lady's Book.

THE GUNSMITH OF PARIS.

BY HORASMUS.

On the afternoon of the 23d of June, 1789, a large mob collected around the blazing palace of the Count St. Almer, in Paris, all armed, and obstinately determined to prevent any one endeavouring to stop the conflagration. Shouts succeeded shouts, as the burning rafters, one by one, fell in, and it was not until the entire building was level with the ground that they dispersed.

In the Rue St. Joseph's, but a few rods from this scene of outrage, was the workshop of Pierre Martel, the Gunsmith of Paris. It was a low, ten foot building, with nothing remarkable enough in its exterior to recommend it to notice, save the fact of so mean a building being situated so near the princely palace of the proud and haughty Count St. Almer, the favorite of the King. On the afternoon which is referred to, heedless of the tumult without, Pierre, and his apprentice Antoine, were quietly at work in the little shop. Government had employed him to furnish a stand of arms within a certain period, and upon this work he was now engaged. Every shout of the mob was distinctly heard by the Gunsmith, still the hammer rung upon the anvil, as if he wished its clinking might drown the uproar; but from the frequent glances which the apprentice cast toward the window, it was evident that he, at least, had rather be at liberty to join the crowd than at work.

'Your mind is absent, boy,' said Martel, looking up—'Go if you wish, and learn a lesson Frenchmen never should forget.'

Fresh bursts of applause, & shouts of 'Vive l' republique' filled the air, and the apprentice of Martel, gladly availing himself of this privilege, took his cap and left the shop. For another hour Martel worked on in silence; he was then interrupted by the entrance of a neighbour.

'Most glorious news, Martel,' cried the new courier, "but how is this—why are you at work when all Paris is alive with rejoicing?'

'What has happened, Briel?' inquired Martel, calmly.

'Are you an idiot?' exclaimed Briel. 'Do you pretend to say you have not heard the news?'

'Nay, good Briel,' replied Martel, 'I am but a poor mechanic, and can ill afford to lose my time for every show that comes along,'

'Well then, the story is simply this,' said Briel

'Be as brief as possible,' interrupted Martel, 'my work is at a stand while I am talking with you.'

'A mob of citizens,' continued Briel, 'attacked the palace of the haughty Count St. Almer, the King's favorite, and levelled it with the ground. But what is better, two companies of the Royal Guards, which were ordered out, refused to fire upon the mob—

'And the Count,' exclaimed Martel, eagerly.

'Escaped during the confusion in the disguise of a monk.'

'Heaven be praised,' said Martel, "he is yet reserved to feel my vengeance'—

'You, Martel?'

'Yes. I've sworn an oath, a horrid oath—the Count shall die a violent death.'

'How has he offended you,' said Briel.

'Swear by the mother of him who died upon the cross never to divulge without my consent what I may now impart.'

'I swear.'

'Many years ago,' said Martel, "the Count St. Almer, by reason of his enormous crimes, was forced to embrace the Church or perish upon the scaffold. Of course, he chose the first, became a monk, and afterwards confessor. I had a daughter then, a sweet flower just budding into womanhood. She was the very image of her sainted mother, and as I watched her dawning beauties, day by day, I fancied I had a solace for my old age. She was accustomed to confess to St. Almer—a double dealing villain as he was—or as he was styled, Father Jerome, who from the first moment he saw her, laid a plan for her destruction. Too well did he succeed—what means he used—what fiend he summoned to his aid I know not, but my poor girl fell a victim to his infernal arts. She is now dead of a broken heart, and he stalks unharmed a favorite of the King. But a day of retribution is at hand.—In less than one short month the anniversary of her death will come round—let the Count look to himself'—

'How happens it,' said Briel, 'if the Count took the cowl he is still a noble?'

'When the present Louis ascended the throne of France,' replied Martel, 'he petitioned the See of Rome to restore St. Almer to his titles—it was granted.'

'But think, Martel,' said Briel, 'think of your own fate if you persist in your intention. The Count is rich and powerful—allied to the best blood of France. The King has not a greater favorite.'

'Were he the King—were he Louis himself' exclaimed Martel, fiercely, 'but hush, here comes Antoine. Well boy, what has brought you back?'

'Come to the window, quickly,' cried Antoine—'see—see the mob have discovered the retreat of the Count, and are pressing upon him.'

Martel threw open the window, and looking in the direction pointed out by Antoine, saw a single person contending with the mob. He was a man, apparently about thirty years of age, of a tall form, and well proportioned.—Around his left arm was wound the remains of a scarlet roquelaire, trimmed with gold lace, torn and dusty. His white feather hung drooping over his face, and the glittering jewels of his hat were broken, and some entirely destroyed. With his right hand he wielded a shining blade. Retreating slowly, and disputing every inch, he kept them at bay, while at a little distance stood the two companies of the Royal Guards, leaning on their arms and looking tamely on.

'He comes this way,' exclaimed Martel—'Antoine give me an axe—throw the door wide open'—

'Martel, what mean you,' demanded Briel, 'what are you going to do?'

'What I please, Briel,' replied Martel.

'You are not going to kill him. By Heavens, you shall not murder him while I stand here.'

'Back, Briel—interfere at your peril' shouted Martel. 'I act my pleasure—enough, I will not murder him *now*.'

Instantly the Count darted into the shop, and pushing the door to, exclaimed—'Citizen if you be a man, protect me from the fury of the rabble.'

'Umph,' said Martel, 'does the proud Count St. Almer claim the protection of a poor, despised mechanic—you forget, my lord.'

'You will not refuse me?'

'No. Were the murderer of my own mother to cross my threshold and claim the protection of my roof, he should have it, even if my own life was the forfeit.'

The door-way and shop was now filled with the excited mob, shouting 'down with him—down with the aristocracy—vive l' republique.'

'Back—back,' shouted Martel, brandishing his ponderous axe—'back—one and all—the man who moves a step toward the Count receives his death. Shame on ye, men of Paris, to attack a single man with such fearful odds. What is his crime?'

'He's the King's favorite,' murmured several voices.

'And what of that,' retorted Martel, 'because the king bestows more love on him than you, are you bound to wreak your spite on him. Shame, citizens! where is your boasted generosity. Go and leave him to me.'

There was a whispering for a few minutes among the crowd, and then with a shout of 'vive l' Martel,' they cleared the shop, leaving Martel alone with the Count.

The French are ever inconsistent—ever acting from the impulse of the moment. A short time before, the infuriated mob would have torn the nobleman in pieces could they have got at him, now there was not one who would have refused to act in his defence if Martel did but say the word.

'Citizen,' said St. Almer, 'you have my heartfelt thanks."

'You owe me nothing,' replied Martel. 'I saved your life because it was my pleasure so to do. It would have been to me but poor revenge to let you perish by the mob. I'd see you die a lingering death—you know me not.'

'Indeed, you're right.'

'Your highness has forgot,' continued Martel; 'listen while I relate a short and simple but true tale. There was once a nobleman of Paris whom the Count St. Almer *honored* with his friendship and confidence. This nobleman had an only child, a young and tender girl, whom the Count St. Almer, under the mask of friendship, by his devilish arts betrayed, and then thinking it satisfaction enough, consented to cross blades with the injured father. The Count fell with a wound in his breast, then the nobleman was banished, and—

"Enough, Victor Morain"—

"Aye, villain, I warrant you know me now.'

'Help, ho!' cried St. Almer, darting toward the door.

But the quick hand of the Gensmith was upon his throat, and dragged him back.

'Monster,' said St. Almer, his voice husky with terror—"would you murder me."

"No! great Count, not now; your time has not yet come. Until the thirteenth of July you are respited, for by the Holy Virgin, by Heaven, by the sun, moon and stars, by the power that rules above us, you shall not survive that day."

Saying this he released his prisoner, who, horror-stricken, staggered against the forge, and then rushed out of the building.

* * * * * * * *

Night had already cast its shadows for several hours upon the city of Paris, when Martel, the Gunsmith, enveloped in the ample folds of a large cloak, issued from his humble dwelling, and took his way to the most unfrequented part of the city. There was no moon, and the faint glimmering of the street lamps, barely gave light sufficient to show his path. He paused for an instant as he reached the outskirts of the city and looked back in the deep gloom, to see if he was watched; but nothing met his eye save the jagged rough-cast buildings of the poorer classes. Exchanging civilities with the guard on duty, he wrapped his cloak closer about and passed into the environs with a quickened step. For an hour he kept steadily at the same pace, until he suddenly stopped at the entrance of a grave yard; casting another look behind, to assure himself no one followed, he entered the yard, and gave a peculiar rap upon the face of a tomb-stone. Instantly the stone sunk into the wall, a bright ray of light darted out, and several voices murmured—"'tis he.' Passing in, the wall closed up, and Martel found himself in the presence of twenty or thirty men, whose knit brows and clenched fists showed they had met together for no common purpose. Martel immediately recognized the faces of Robespierre, Danton, Marat and others, and casting his cloak aside, he took a seat at the table.

'You are late to night,' said Robespierre, in a low cautious tone.

"I am,' replied Martel—'I had difficulty in avoiding the extra patrols which are out tonight, I was obliged to wait until their duty took them to another part of the city.'

"What news have you from the gay city?" asked Danton

"The best, all Paris is ripe for revolt. This very afternoon, the palace of the Count St. Almer was assaulted by the mob, and razed to the ground, and even the military sided with the populace."

"That is indeed the best of news," said Robespierre. "Have you finished the stand of arms?"

"I have; and, to avoid suspicion, have given out that they were for Government."

"Then every thing is ready," continued Robespierre. "A few more riots, such as this day has produced, will revolutionize France, and then farewell to royalty. We must now let actions speak, enough has been wasted in words. When shall we commence?"

"As soon as possible," replied Martel, "but the populace must be armed, and let the first action be the boldest, something which will strike terror to the hearts of the king and his ministry."

"The Bastile," muttered Marat.

"The Bastile," echoed a dozen voices.

'Let the Bassile then be the first attack,' said Martel, 'but stay—the people must be armed The Hotel des Invalides contains thirty thousand muskets. Shall we first possess ourselves of them?

'It were best so to do" said Robespierre, 'but when?'

'On the thirteenth of July,' replied Martel.

'The tocsin shall be sounded exactly at noon, to call together the Parisians, and the conflagration of the Hotel des Invalides shall be the signal to our distant friends."

'Be it so,' said Robespierre, 'and now before we separate—here in the close neighborhood of the mighty dead—up all, and swear to achieve the liberty of France.'

'Every sword flashed in the dim candle-light, as the conspirators answered, 'We swear.'

* * * * * *

Immediately upon leaving the shop of the Gunsmith, St. Almer proceeded, with hasty steps, to the palace of the Tuilleries. There he was never denied admittance; learning the King was in his private closet, he ran through the familiar passages, and with more haste than ceremony, threw the door open, and ushered himself in.

Louis was gazing out of the window, and as the door opened, he turned with an angry rebuke upon his tongue for those who had thus dared to intrude upon his privacy without previous notice; but his anger quickly turned to mirth, when he beheld the wo begone countenance of St. Almer.

'How now, St. Almer,' exclaimed he, with a merry laugh, 'what has happened to cause you to look so poverty-stricken?'

'Many men would have hung themselves for the loss of such a palace as mine,' replied St. Almer.

'And what of that," rejoined Louis, 'six million francs from our royal treasury are already yours to assist in restoring your palace to its former beauty. To-morrow we hold a court, and measures shall then be taken to bring the rioters to justice. Meanwhile, to show you that the loss of wealth has not in the least diminished our love and respect, accept this chain.—'

St Almer knelt, while Louis carelessly threw over his neck a costly string of pearls and diamonds.

'Most gracious Liege,' said St. Almer rising, 'should you ever stand in need of my poor services, recollect that there is one sword at least which will spring from its scabbard to assert your rights: But to the business which brought me here. Does your majesty remember Victor Morain, Count of Chavoigne, whom the late King banished?'

'Perfectly.'

'He has returned unbidden from his banishment. He is now in Paris, in the disguise of a mechanic, and threatens my life.'

'For what?'

'An old feud between our families. Would it please your majesty to grant me a file of soldiers to lodge him within the Bastile?'

'Most assuredly, cousin, if your life is in danger,' replied Louis, writing a few lines and giving it to St. Almer. 'Here is an order to that effect."

St. Almer bowed, upon receiving the paper, and drawing his hat over his face, left the apartment. The following morning, just at day-break, the key of the gloomy Bastile was turned upon Pierre Martel.

* * * * * *

That day, a grand court was held by the royal family. Upon the throne sat Louis the Sixteenth, of France, and by the side, his consort, the unfortunate Maria Antoinette The lillies of France, upon silken banners, drooped over their heads, and a body of the faithful Swiss Guard, with fixed bayonets, were drawn in double lines about the base of the throne. Immediately in front, was a table costly decorated, around which were gathered the nobles and peers of the Realm. At the foot of the throne, on the right, stood the Count St. Almer, and upon the left M. de Launay, Governor of the Bastile. The rest of the individuals present consisted of the body guard, household officers and troops, servants and retailers.

'My Lords and Nobles,' said Louis, rising 'it is with extreme regret we have learned the depredation that was committed but yesterday upon the property of a good and loyal subject, the Count St. Almer. Sire de Launay, you will see that the rebellious soldiery, who yesterday refused to fire upon the mob according to your orders, are arrested and brought before us. The Count will furnish you with a list of the ringleaders of the riot, you will attend to it.'

'May it please your majesty,' said Launay.

'What say you,' replied Louis.

'It were best to station a few troops at the Bastile, as I fear the next building the mob assault will be that.'

'It shall be done,' said Louis. 'Now bring in the prisoner.'

The trumpet sounded. The retainers at the lower end of the hall divided, and the Gunsmith appeared between a file of soldiers.

'Release him,' said Louis.—It was done

'Are you Pierre Martel?'

'By that name, I am addressed,' replied the Gunsmith.

'But Victor Morain, Count of Chavoigne, is your true title, is it not?'

'It is.'

'Were you not banished from the Court of France by an edict of the late King?' continued Louis.

'Most true,' replied the Gunsmith.

'For what term?'

'Twenty-five years.'

'Has it yet expired?'

'Scarce half.'

'Why then, dared you to return, without permission?' demanded Louis.

'Because it suited my convenience. If that be not satisfactory, find an answer to content yourself.'

'Audacious subject,' thundered Louis, but checking himself, said in a calmer tone, 'you are accused of meditating violence against the life of Count St. Almer—nay, you have been heard to declare he should perish by your hand. Call the witnesses.

'Less unnecessary,' interrupted Martel, 'I demand it.'

'You then acknowledge yourself guilty.'

'I have already told you trembling nobleman, he should not survive the thirteenth of July. I still say it.'

'Neither shall you, Victor Morain,' interrupted Louis. 'We here appoint that day for your execution; and to see the sentence carried into effect, St. Almer, we appoint you officer of the day.'

'So please your majesty,' said St. Almer, 'Pray you excuse me.'

'I have said it,' replied Louis decisively, 'away with the prisoner!'

'Break up the court,' continued he—'St. Almer, we would speak with you in private.'

* * * * * *

Time flies. The scene is changed to the great hall of the Bastile. The time, July thirteenth, 1789. A file of soldiers were drawn out Upon one side stood the Count St. Almer, Sire de Launay and a Priest, who was performing the last sad offices for a criminal under sentence of death. Upon the other stood an executioner, with his axe and block, and keeling upon the one knee, his neck bared, his head resting upon the block, was Pierre Martel, the Gunsmith of Paris.

'Victor Morain,' said St. Almer, as the Priest closed the book.

The Gunsmith looked up.

'The thirteenth of July has arrived,'

'But its sun has not *yet set*,' replied Martel with a bitter smile.

'Executioner,' said Launay, 'raise your axe.'

A moment of dread silence followed,—

'Strike!'

At that instant, a distant shout was heard, followed by the rattling of musquetry, and a strange, unearthly sound—faint indeed, but sufficient to arrest the attention of every one present. It was the *Tocsin*.

'Father of mercies,' exclaimed Launay, 'what new outrage is about to be perpetrated? Ha! the Hotel des Invalides in enveloped in flames.'

A cry escaped from the lips of St. Almer, as the axe hurled by the hands of the Gunsmith whizzed within an inch of his head, and buried itself in the woodwork of the door. Martel was instantly seized by the soldiers and after a short scuffle, secured. During this, a large mob had collected around the prison, shouting and knocking on the gate.

'Throw open the window of the balcony,' said Launay—'what would you have, citizens!'

Another shout arose, and several missiles were thrown towards the balcony. 'Silence!' cried a voice above the rest—it was Robespierre's. 'We would have you restore to us the person of Pierre Martel, safe and uninjured."

"It cannot be done, without an order from the King. He is a prisoner of State.'

'Dare to refuse and we'll burst the gates in.'

'Launay drew back in time to escape a bullet which whistled close to his ears.

'They are bringing battering-rams against the gates," exclaimed Launay, as a dead hollow sound echoed through the building. 'Heaven help us or we are lost—again—again—it can stand such shocks but a short time longer—the hinges have already started from their sockets—crash—the chains are broke—the bolts give way. Mother of Heaven come to our aid!'

Crash—crash—crash—down fell the gates with a stunning noise—the mob rushed in and a scene of blood and carnage ensued—Launay was assassinated, his head fixed upon a bayonet and carried into the street—one by one was the garrison murdered, and their mangled bodies thrown out into the yard; and then the destruction of the building commenced.

But where was Martel? When the gates gave in, he burst from those who held him and pursued St. Almer through all the turns and windings of the prison until they reached the roof, where St. Almer in despair clung to the railing. With the cry of a fiend, Martel sprung upon him—he lost his balance and fell over the battlements, dragging St. Almer with him. They reached the ground just as a turret tottered and fell upon them, covering them from the sight of every one, and burying their animosities in death.

* * * * * *

Some months after, as the workmen were clearing away a part of the ruins of the Bastile, they came across two bodies, with their hands upon each other's throats. They were Pierre Martel, the Gunsmith of Paris, and his victim, the haughty Count St. Almer.

Boston, December, 1838.

EXTRAORDINARY SUICIDE.

Two suicides, accompanied with the most extraordinary and even romantic circumstances occurred in New York on Sunday The first was that of Petro de Paolo Qualuense, a native of Smyrna aged 20 years, who killed himself at 221 Fulton street. It appeared at the coroner's inquest, that the deceased, who had boarded there for a long time, became passionately enamored of a young German Girl also boarding there, named Josephine Jerman; but his passion was not reciprocated—and he was moreover desperately jealous of a barber, and this drove him nearly to desperation.

About a fortnight ago, while conversing with a friend, he spoke of the girl in the warmest terms, and said he wished to marry her, but she had refused to have him, and he intended to shoot her and then himself. His friend advised him of the folly of such a proceeding, and so far soothed his feelings as to induce him to leave the house for a time. Absence, however, only increased his passion, and he soon returned, and again pressed his suit upon the girl, and was again rejected. On Sunday morning, about nine o'clock, he went into her room, and after again pleading his cause in vain, he drew two pistols from his pocket.

One he discharged at her, the ball lodging in her right side, and causing a wound from which it is feared medical skill cannot save her, and the other he discharged at his own head. The reports of the pistol and the cries of the unfortunate girl brought some of the inmates of the house to the dreadful scene, where he was found lying across the girl on the bed, both of them completely deluged in blood, and she bespattered with his brains. He was still alive, but speechless, and in a few minutes he expired.

Medical assistance was promptly called in to the aid of the hapless girl, but the efforts of the physicians to extract the ball have thus far proved ineffectual, and it is more than probable that she cannot survive. In the case of the young man, who committed these dreadful deeds, the jury returned a verdict of suicide, by shooting himself through the head with a pistol.

IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT.

Report of the Select Committee of the House of Delegates of Maryland, on Imprisonment for Debt.

The committee to whom was referred the leave that was granted for a bill to abolish imprisonment for debt, knowing the great anxiety which is felt in relation to that matter, now give notice that they will lay such a bill before this house, in the course of next week. It has been thought advisable not to proceed hastily, but to take time for due deliberation on a measure of so much importance, and to afford an opportunity for consultation and union amongst its friends.

The committee do not imagine that they are capable of presenting any new views on a subject which has heretofore been so ably discussed, nor do they aspire to do more than to produce the strong points which have been urged elsewhere. They take this occasion to report some of the considerations which have influenced the committee in arriving at the conclusion that the law of imprisonment for debt ought to be abolished and expunged from the Statute Book of Maryland. They are unanimously of opinion, that it is unwise, impolitic and unjust, oppressive, cruel and odious.

It is in a great measure the result of judicial usurpation, forced construction, and absurd legal fictions, transmitted as a curse to posterity.

It is an abominable and disgusting relic of that atrocious policy of ancient and superstitious Rome, which authorised the subjecting of the debtor's person to chains, stripes and ignominy, which sanctioned the dismembering of his body, the cutting of it up into pieces, and the parcelling of them out, to inhuman creditors, in shares proportioned to the amount of debt; or which permitted his wife and children to be sold and exiled to perpetual servitude.

It subjects to a humiliating penalty an inestimable citizen, or a helpless fellow being, because he is not endowed with the super human faculty of controlling the destinies of fortune, or of performing that which is an utter impossibility.

It inflicts upon its victim a rigorous punishment for the not doing of that, which calamitous circumstances have disabled him from doing, and which it wantonly and absolutely takes away from him the only possible means of performing.

It is not less unfair and unequal in its operation, than was its kindred measure, the law which gave the benefit of clergy to those who had the least moral claim to exemption from punishment, whilst it treated with the utmost severity the great mass of individuals, whose misfortune it was not to have been blessed with the advantages of having been instructed to read and write, and of becoming thereby better enabled to understand the law, so as to abstain from committing infractions upon it, or to screen their misdeeds under its quirks and ambiguities.

It treats the innocent as a culprit, it incarcerates him as if he were a felon; and it often visits him with greater severity and more prolonged suffering; thereby confounding virtue with vice, indiscretion with fraud, and misfortune with crime.

There is no necessity for it, and there is no reason in it, other than that which is found in fallacious arguments based upon erroneous premises, and derived from the worst of ancient prejudices, no longer suited to the times and spirit of the age, or to the state and circumstances of the country.

It is inimical to the American republican form of government, for wherever, in other countries the creditor has been authorized to exercise a control over the person as well as the property of his debtor, it has invariably been found that liberty could not exist there long; or that it was a mere name for a despotism in reality—or for a corrupt government of patricians and plebeians.

It is an abuse of the power of the State, by the encouragement which it holds out for oppression; and by the virtual withdrawing from the weak and unfriended, that protection which the State owes to the humblest of its citizens.

It is inconsistent with that fundamental article of our declared rights; which guarantees to every citizen, not charged with any criminal offence, the uninterrupted pursuit of happiness and the unmolested enjoyment of personal liberty.

It reverses the established principle of law and justice which always presumes innocence until guilt be made to appear.

It is in its utmost modification a harsh and humiliating restraint upon personal liberty—for the very requiring of bail is nothing less than a presumption of guilt, a direct insinuation of fraud, or an imputation of dishonor.

It is a palpable violation of that christian precept which teaches us to believe upon our common faith in the Redeemer, that it is far better that ninety-nine guilty be spared, than that one who is innocent should suffer.

It is calculated to blunt and impair that moral sense of obligation, those lofty feelings and pride of character, which would operate upon the honest debtor, if he were once assured that the party with whom he contracts relied upon his integrity above every thing else, and upon the guarantee, instead of upon the power which the law permits any sordid and heartless creditor to have over the body of the debtor.

The vilest criminal, the common thief, or the midnight plunderer cannot be imprisoned, arrested or even held to bail, but upon an accusition by testimony, or a declaration of suspicion, *under oath:* whilst the poor and friendless debtor is daily seized and dragged away from the hearth of his family and the ties of his home, and held captive, for a time at least, not in pursuance of the sentence of a court, or of a trial by a jury of his peers, but upon the bare suggestion of any vindictive creditor or his attorney.

The power of imprisonment for debt, *supposes* a trespass wilfully committed, where none was even intended.

It supposes an outrage against the peace and dignity of the State, where none has been attempted or meditated.

No person is compelled to become a creditor of another; whenever that relation exists, it has been voluntarily entered into by the creditor. If he incurs any risk by contracting it, it is with his own consent; and he may first satisfy himself as to the property, ability and integrity of the party he is about to trust. If however, he neglect to take such precaution, or to deal for ready money, rather than forego the additional gain which time may chance to give him, the fault is his own,—a fault not unfrequently more injurious to the debtor than to the creditor; for to the latter, the aggregate of additional gains under his system of crediting at higher prices, derived from the whole number of those who punctually meet their engagements, serves as an insurance fund to compensate him for what he occasionally loses by others.

The power to imprison the debtor, holds out an *inducement* to the tradesman or speculator to trust more to the law than to his own prudence and sagacity; when, by a due exertion of these, he would be more effectually secured than by all the power to imprison his debtor. Eager to force sales, he is less cautious in his inquiries as to the character and means of the purchaser, to whom, as a temptation to decoy him more deeply in debt, the creditor proffers a long credit and pleasing terms, carefully avoiding to intimate that a right to imprison shall be applied as a part of the agreement.

It is questionable whether fraud is less frequent on the part of the creditor than on the part of the debtor.

Imprisonment for debt operates only, almost exclusively, on the really necessitous and truly unfortunate portion of the community, it has, therefore, a tendency to divide people into classes, and to array the affluent against the needy, and the fortunate against the unfortunate.

It is a power which, as long as it shall be tolerated by law, will obstinately bid defiance to public sentiment, the influence of which will never be able to penetrate a bosom where the feeling that predominate are those which spring from the covetuousness of revenge.

Its efficacy to deter individuals from running into debt, like the sleeping force of the statue which prohibits gambling, is contradicted by experience of all ages, as well as by every day's observation. It is no check upon the honest, prudent debtor, because he doubts not of his ability to comply with his engagements; and the fraudulent one will never be deterred by a penalty which he will have cunningly laid his plans to defeat, or have timely measures to evade.

The truth of the maxim, *career non solvit*, has become so manifest, that creditors themselves can no longer controvert it, with any shadow of plausibility. The dangers which they have alleged are chimerical, the fears which they have entertained are imaginary, and the apprehension which they have expressed, may be set down as the suggestions of cupidity, rather than the convictions of reason.

The pretended necessity which is urged in favor of the policy of imprisonment for debt, is but the repetition of the stale and unrighteous plea which tyrants, in every country, have always made as an excuse for the arbitrary power they would exercise.

Experience has fully shown that the advantages supposed to result from the practice of imprisoning debtors, have been greatly overbalanced by the aggregate of additional losses thereby sustained by the creditors themselves in costs, jail fees and other charges; and by the injury done to the community at large by the withdrawing of the service of thousands of individuals from active and useful employment; by withering the hands of industry, by paralyzing the sinews of enterprise, and diminishing, to the same extent, the amount of the productive labour upon which the prosperity of the country depends. The statement exhibited herewith, sufficiently demonstrates that fact.

As a necessary consequence, then, imprisonment for debt is calculated to foster indolence, produce beggary, and promote crime.

It drives multitudes of our citizens into exile compelling them to seek elsewhere a new home, and a refuge from the persecution of relentless creditors, for "free citizens own no country in which they are not permitted to enjoy their freedom."

It not only deprives the country of able and patriotic defenders, but it strips whole families of their peace and comfort; and bereaves them of their rightful guardians and natural protectors.

It is not only at war with the best interests of society, but it is incompatible with the essence of liberty, derogatory to the character of liberal institutions, repugnant to the noblest feelings of humanity, revolting to the just pride and manly spirit which should animate every citizen of an independent Republic, degrading to a people professing to be a nation of freemen, and a disgrace to the enlightened age and country in which we live and legislate.

JAMES W. WILLIAMS, Chairman.

Within the memory of thousands of people now living, the lonely coasts of Australia were scarcely visited but by the winds and waves—There lay, on the map of the world, a huge circle of 'wide watered shores,' inscribed with the general name of New Holland; but what was their climate or their soil—or what manner of men were there in-dwellers—these were matters of which, many a year after the close of the American war, there was a little or nothing accurately known. The fleets of the sovereign company, bearing northward through the Indian Ocean left that vast land three thousand miles upon their right unexplorable and uncared for; and even the captains who gave the convoy of his majesty's flag in the war of 1793, to the traders with Batavia and China,