



regard to the benefit of an insolvent Act as the merchant engaged in business.

In spite of this opposition, however, we think it should not be difficult to frame a simple and inexpensive Act which would be quite sufficient to provide for the fair, economical and rateable distribution of an insolvent's assets, and which should prove acceptable to the banking as well as the mercantile community.

After all is said and done, bankers are only merchants who buy and sell money instead of merchandise, and it should therefore not be difficult to place their claims in such a position as would be fair alike to themselves and the balance of the creditors.

As we have stated previously in these columns, the want of a Dominion Bankruptcy Act is not only hurtful to Canadians at home, but it materially injures our credit abroad, especially in Great Britain, the country with which we are most anxious to cultivate closer trade relations.

As things stand at present, every Canadian province has a different law regarding the distribution of an insolvent's assets, and in several cases, these laws are distinctly unfair and unjust to those creditors who happen to live outside of the province where the bankrupt does business. It would take a smart lawyer all his time to keep pace with the changes regarding insolvents which are passed from time to time by the different local legislatures, none of whom as a matter of fact, really have the right to deal with the question.

What is wanted is a general Act which will apply to every province alike, one that can be readily comprehended by business men as well as lawyers, and one which being simple, economical and just alike to debtor and creditor, may be taken advantage of by a host of honest but unfortunate merchants, to get their affairs straightened up and commence the battle of life afresh.

Such an Act would raise our credit in Great Britain, and materially help to establish the confidence in our integrity which is absolutely necessary if we are to deal more extensively with each other than formerly.

An Insolvent Act such as we have outlined would be a good thing all around. The country needs it, our merchants demand it, and we see no good reason why they should not have it. We trust Mr. McLean will push his bill to an issue.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY DISPUTE.

AS our readers know, gallons of ink have been used and numberless reams of paper wasted in the attempt to show that the twentieth century commenced on the first day of January, 1900.

If ninety-nine cents make one dollar, then this view is correct, but if it takes one hundred cents to make a dollar, then it will take the same number of years to make a century, and we will have to wait until the first of January, 1901, before we really enter upon the new era about which there has been so much discussion and dispute.

However, it is not our present intention to argue this question, as we have already done so at some length in a former issue, but to show our readers that Solomon's saying that "there is nothing new under the sun" appears to be perfectly true in this case, if we may judge by the records of old time disputes upon this subject which have recently been unearthed by curious litterateurs. We do not know for certain, but it is extremely probable that the same dispute has been going on for hundreds of years with just as much vigor and good natured chaff as has characterized the present discussion. Be this as it may, however, we know for sure that it was so one hundred years ago, as the following lines from the pen of Theodore Dwight, who wrote them on New Year's day, 1801, will testify.

"Precisely at 12 o'clock last night
The eighteenth century took its flight.
Full many a calculating head
Has racked its brains: its ink has shed
To prove by metaphysics fine
A hundred means but ninety nine.
While at their wisdom others wondered,
But took one more to make a hundred.
Strange at the eighteenth century's close,
While light in beams effulgent glows,
When bright illumination's ray
Has chased the darkness far away,
Heads filled with mathematics' lore
Dispute if two and two make four.
Go on, ye scientific sages,
Collect your light a few more ages,
Perhaps as swells the vast amount
A century hence you'll learn to count."

WHAT ROBT. A. PINKERTON, THE GREAT DETECTIVE, SAID TO THE JEWELERS' SECURITY ALLIANCE.

THE Jewelers' Security Alliance of the United States has for the past sixteen years retained the services of the Pinkerton Detective Agency, to look after the interests of its members in case of safe burglary, and in a letter to the Executive Committee, dated January 23rd, 1900, Mr. Robt. A. Pinkerton makes a number of statements and comments which are of great interest to the members of the Jewelers' Security Alliance in Ontario, and especially to the jewelers of Ontario who are not members.

Amongst other things he said: "We have the pleasure of congratulating you for the third consecutive time on the fact that *not one of your members has had a safe robbed during the year*. This does not indicate that safe-burglars have retired from business, and that your protection is no longer necessary, for there never has been a time when safe and bank-vault burglars were more active than during the past three years, and especially in 1899, when more than 300 jewelry stores were burglarized and thirty-five jewelers' safes were attacked by burglars.