&c, &c, which invariably accompany the distribution of moneys in Court, proclaim to creditors that when they enter *there*, they must leave all hope behind them; while, on the other hand, the judicious management and nursing of the estate by the careful and experienced persons generally selected as trustees, seldom fail to give satisfaction (if that be a possible feeling with less than twenty shillings) to the creditors, and spares to the debtor the sad contemplation of assets entirely frittered away. But the majority of the Judges of the Court of Queen's Bench are of opinion, and have distinctly and unequivocally decided, that inasmuch as the law of France, as it prevailed at the time of the cession of this country, did not sanction voluntary assignments, such as we are now discussing, and as the Legislature of the Province has not yet thought fit to introduce them, their adoption and general use by the mercantile community will not suffice to give them legal vitality and force; and some of the learned Judges have expressed strong doubts as to the degree of preference to be given to that mode of liquidation over one that takes place under the immediate eye of a judicial tribunal.

The law, then, does not place it in the power of the debtor, whom the vicissitudes of trade have broken down, to relieve himself and start afresh, on giving up all that he has. He must, therefore, struggle on, oppressed with the intolerable burthen of old debts, and engage in the hopeless task of Sisyphus, or he must have recourse to some of those modes of foiling creditors, which are now so constantly brought under the notice of the Courts, and to which the upright trader, parting with his fair fame, shrinkingly and reluctantly resorts, and only, as it were, in defence of life and limb. We allude in particular, to the *séparation de biens* and fictitious-partnership schemes, which the hardy creditor who is not to be imposed upon and who is willing to spend some money and no little time in Court, may expose and defeat, but which, as the said stout-hearted creditor is the exception to the rule, generally prove a sufficiently strong shield against old scores. When men, striving to do right, are driven to such shifts as these, the demand for legal reform, upon this branch of the law, becomes imperative.

But, while charity and common justice call for some measure of relief on behalf of the simply unfortunate in trade, the existing state of the law justifies the appeal of creditors for some comprehensive and at the same time stringent remedy against the dishonest debtor. The Bankrupt Acts of 1839 and 1843, and subsequent statutes now in force, set forth divers pains and penalities to be inflicted upon persons guilty of certain fraudulent practices therein mentioned, but though frauds of all kinds abound and the particular frauds referred to are of very frequent occurrence, the law has hitherto proved to be a dead letter. Unless dishonesty in trade be met by measures *sharp and summary*, knavery will continue to flourish, confident in the efficacy of the great emollient, *Time*, when skillfully presented to an indignant creditor. And every day's experience shows how great are the facilities extended, by the imperfect provisions of the existing laws, to the unscrupulous and wary trader who has made up his mind to "stop," and draw his subsistence, for such time as may suit his convenience, from concealed stores or cash, *ære alieno*, laid up in due season for the well-matured occasion.