

value which even the most profligate were compelled to recognize and respect. Each of these items of improvement, however, had its own peculiar drawback. Under the influence of the commercial spirit, neighbors have become less kind, and the people in general less hospitable. The comparative independence of the poorer classes has separated them more widely from the upper than they had ever been separated before; and mutual jealousies and heartburnings mark, in consequence, the more ameliorated condition. The number of traders and shopkeepers has become disproportionably large; and while a few succeed and make money, and a few more barely maintain their ground at an immense expense of care and exertion, there is a considerable portion of the class who have to struggle on for years, perhaps involved in a labyrinth of shifts and expedients that prove alike unfavorable to their own character and to the security of trade in general, and then end in insolvency at last. The large command of money, too, furnished at times by imprudent bank accommodation, has in some instances awakened a spirit of speculation among the people, which seems but too much akin to that of the gambler, and which has materially lowered the tone of public morals in at least the creditor and debtor relation. Bankruptcy, in consequence, is regarded with very different feelings in the present day from what it was sixty years ago. It has lost much of the old infamy which used to pass downwards from a man to his children, and is now too often looked upon as merely the natural close of an unlucky speculation, or, worse still, as a sort of speculation in itself.

There is one branch of trade, in particular, which has been suffered to increase by far too much for the weal of the country. More than two thousand pounds are squan-