

The professed design of the meeting was to reform and amend the plan; but in fact when they came to examine it they found themselves obliged to pass the same sentence on it that was once delivered concerning the famous poet, Alexander Pope, whose usual ejaculation was *God mend me!* "Mend you, said a hackney coachman, (looking with contempt on his dwarfish form and hump back) "it would not be half so much trouble to make a new one!"

A new one was accordingly entered upon, and the fundamental principle of it was, not to suppose men as good as they ought to be, but to take them as they are. "It is true, said they, that all men are naturally free and equal; it is a very good idea, and ought to be understood in every contract and partnership which can be formed; it may serve as a check upon ambition and other human passions, and put people in mind that they may some time or other be called to account by their equals. But it is as true that this equality is destroyed by a thousand causes which exist in nature and in society. It is true that all beasts, birds, and fishes are naturally free and equal in some respects, but yet we find them unequal in other respects, and one becomes the prey of another. There is, and always will be, a superiority and an inferiority, in spite of all the systems of metaphysics that ever existed. How can you prevent one man from being stronger or wiser, or richer than another? and will not the strong overcome the weak? will not the cunning circumvent the foolish? and will not the borrower become servant to the lender? Is not this noble, free, and independent creature man, necessarily subject to lords of his own species in every stage of his existence? When a child is he not under the command of his parents? send him to school, place him out as an apprentice, put him on board a ship, enrol him in a company of militia, must he not be subject to a master? Place him in any kind of society whatever, and he has wants to be supplied, and passions to be subdued; his active powers need to be directed, and his extravagancies to be controuled, and if he will not do it himself, some body must do it for him. Self government is indeed the most perfect form of government in the world; but if men will not govern themselves, they must have some governors appointed over them, who will keep them in order and make them do their duty. Now if there is in fact such an inequality existing among us, why should we act as if no such thing existed? We have tried the *Beaver* scheme of partnership long enough, and find it will not do. Let us then adopt the practice of another kind of industrious animals which we have among us—Let us imitate the *Bees*, who are governed by one supreme head, and under that direction conduct their whole economy with perfect order and regularity."

On this principle they drew up an entire new plan, in which there was one chief steward, who was to manage their united interest, and be responsible to the whole for his conduct. He was to have a kind of council to advise and direct him, and several inferior officers to assist him, as there might be occasion; and a certain contribution was to be levied on the trade, or on the estates of the whole, which was to make a common stock for the support of the common interest; and they were to erect a tribunal among themselves, which should decide and determine all differences. If nine of the families should agree to this plan, it was to take place; and the others might or might not adopt it; but if any one should finally refuse, or if any should adopt it and afterwards fall from it, he was to be looked upon as an outcast, and no person was to have any connection with him. The