

ed what they supposed to be more than their proportion; others had paid less. The former would give no more till the latter had made up their quotas, and there was no authority which could call any one to account, or make him do his duty. Their whole estates were mortgaged for the money which they had borrowed of Mr. Lewis* and Mr. Frog;† and yet they could carry on no business in partnership. In fact, they had formed such an unheard-of kind of partnership, that though they could run themselves in debt, yet they could not oblige one another to raise any money to discharge their debts.

Each family however carried on a separate trade, and they contrived to undersell each other, both at home and at market. Each family also had a separate debt, which some were providing means to discharge, and others neglected. In one or two of the families they went to loggerheads among themselves. John Codrington‡ family was for several days a scene of confusion and disorder; nothing was seen or heard but cursing and calling names, kicking shins, and pulling noses. John at first tried to silence them by gentle means, but finding these ineffectual, he at length drew his scymitar, and swore he would cut off the ears of the first that should dare to make any more noise. This threatening drove two or three turbulent fellows out of doors, after which the house was tolerably quiet. Something of the same kind happened in Robert Lumber's § family, but he made so good a use of his fist as quelled the disturbance at once.

In the family of Roger Carrier|| there seemed to be a predominant lurch for knavery, for he publicly advertised that he was ready to pay his debts by notes of hand subject to a discount, the amount of which was indefinite, because continually increasing; and that whoever did not take his pay when thus offered, might go without. The other families were alarmed at his conduct; but had no power to oblige him to deal honestly, and he carried his roguery so far as to bid them all defiance.

In this state of debility and distraction, it became necessary to consult on some measures for a better plan of union. They began to be convinced that they were not *Beavers*, nor capable of subsisting in such a state of society as had been adopted from them. Something more energetic was wanted to compel the lazy, to check the knavish, to direct the industrious, and to keep the honest from being imposed upon. It had been often in contemplation to amend the mode of partnership; but now the disorders in some of the families became so alarming, that though they had been quelled for the present, it was uncertain whether they would not break out again, especially as one whole family seemed determined openly to patronise roguery. These considerations served to hasten the change which had been contemplated. It was accordingly moved in the club, that each family should appoint one or more persons to meet together, and consult upon some alterations and improvements in the partnership.

It is not in my power to give you a particular detail of the whole proceedings of the meeting which was held to reform the plan of partnership in the manner of your parliamentary journalists, who make speeches for the members, perhaps better than some of them make for themselves; but I will endeavour to give you a summary of the principles on which they proceeded.

* France, † Holland, ‡ Massachusetts, § New-Hampshire, || Rhode-Island.