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## A Federalist

### *Massachusetts Centinel*, 26 January 1788

Mr. PRINTER, As the author of the *infamous* libel in Edes's paper of the 21st inst. who like the vile assassin that stabs in the dark, is still undiscovered—I beg leave to ask whether he may not be found among the following description of characters, who are *notoriously* known to be exceedingly industrious in encouraging the members who are opposed to the Constitution, to a perseverance in their *erroneous* principles, by taking them going in and coming out of the Convention, as well as visiting them at their lodgings almost every evening?

Whether it can possibly be one who *purchased* a *seat* a little distant from town, and is well known for his partiality for paper money?<sup>1</sup>

Whether it is probable it can be the quondam Parson, whose novel publication, the other day, excited the risibility of your readers?

Whether it may be one whose zeal leads him to come every day from a neighbouring town, for the laudable purpose of making proselytes to antifederalism and who has discovered to the world, a phenomena in nature, and instanced in himself the possibility of a reformation from the most notorious habit of — ?<sup>2</sup>

Whether it may chance to be one who contracted a debt in France, in the late war, and has conveyed his estate into other hands, to prevent his creditor from recovering his just dues?

Whether one who is as noted for his *obscene*, *extravagant* language, as he is for his appearance, can possibly be the author of it?<sup>3</sup>

Whether a man could possibly be guilty of it, who left town, to avoid paying a just debt, abused his creditor's agent for arresting him in a neighbouring State, and broke jail when confined by the laws of his country?

Whether it may not be one who had the address to place a pair of antlers on his neighbour's head?

1. Probably James Warren who, in 1781, purchased the Milton house of Thomas Hutchinson, the former royal governor.

2. Probably James Winthrop of Cambridge, the likely author of the "Agrippa" essays.

3. Probably Benjamin Austin, Jr., author of the essays of "Honestus" and "Candidus," among others.

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