

CELESTIAL

BOON FROM HEAVEN

It is ardently to be wished, writes a correspondent, that the little nest of villains, who inhabit the petty territory of R.I. may not have the grace to accept of the CONSTITUTION—that boon from heaven, offered to an half-ruined country, in order to restore it to a state of happiness and splendour.

Massachusetts Centinel, 26 April 1788 (RCS R.I., 257)

THE BRIGHTEST STAR IN THE CONSTELLATION OF THE UNITED STATES

Shut your mouths ye envious curs who bark at the brightest star in the constellation of the United States!

Newport Herald, 6 December 1787 (RCS SUPPL. R.I., #80, p. 76)

DAWN OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT

May the American drums soon beat reveille to the dawn of the new government, and tattoo to anarchy and confusion.

Toast, *Trenton Mercury*, 25 December 1788 (RCS N.J., 190)

DAZZLING SPLENDOR OF THE SUN

The British constitution is supposed to be superior to every other government in the world; it is the favorite boast of its subjects;—it is the admiration of *Europe*:—But compare the *Fæderal Constitution* with this *highly extolled government*, and you will find its excellencies eclipsed, like the faint lustre of the *moon*, by the dazzling splendor of the *sun*.

Virginia Independent Chronicle, 28 November 1787 (RCS VA., 177)

THE FEDERAL CONSTELLATION

Without a doubt, *Vermont* will accede to, and thereby add, to use a favourite figure, another STAR to the Federal CONSTELLATION.

Boston *Columbian Centinel*, 3 November 1790 (RCS SUPPL. VT., #61, p. 29)

GLOBE OF THE MOON

The federal plan, like the globe of the moon, will appear perfect from a true observation—though both may seem covered with inferior spots.

New Hampshire Spy, 1 January 1788 (CC 3, 210)

HEAVENLY ILLUMINATION

Why was the small minority [in the Constitutional Convention] (who could not in conscience accede) denied their share in this heavenly illumination?

“Helvidius Priscus” II (James Warren?), Boston *Independent Chronicle*
10 January 1788 (CC 3, 333)

MERIDIAN RADIANCE

So far from thinking that the sun of this country was obscured by this new constitution, he did not doubt but that whenever it was adopted, the sun of this state, united with twelve other suns, would exhibit a meridian radiance astonishing to the world.

John Rutledge, Speech in the South Carolina House of Representatives
18 January 1788 (RCS S.C., 154–55)

THE MERIDIAN SPLENDOUR

The vapours begin to disperse—the meridian splendour of the new Constitution, beams upon the people in all its majesty and lustre—and under its blessed influences they anticipate all that happiness which a free and equal government can bestow. More of this revolution in my next.

“Peregrine,” *Massachusetts Centinel*
23 April 1788 (RCS SUPPL. MASS., #841, p. 361)

METEOR

Blaze after blaze indignant from his eyes,
 Moved like a meteor through the vesper'd skies.

“Z,” Providence *United States Chronicle*
 8 January 1789 (RCS SUPPL. R.I., #247, p. 197)

THE NEW CONSTELLATION

That these great objects may engage the attention of every citizen,—
 that it may be the universal endeavor to wipe out the disgrace we have
 incurred, and that this State may recover her pristine reputation, and
 shine an ornament to the new Constellation, is the sincere wish of “A
 Friend to the Rights of Mankind.”

“A Friend to the Rights of Mankind,” *Newport Herald*
 24 July 1788 (RCS SUPPL. R.I., #190, p. 157)

NORTH STAR

In my humble Opinion I look on the Federal Constitution to be as
 firmly fixed as the North Star.

Adrian Bancker to Evert Bancker, Hermitage, Staten Island, N.Y.
 3 July 1788 (RCS N.Y., 1253)

ONE GLORIOUS SUN

In short, the system would make us formidable abroad, & keep us very
peaceable at home; & with some amendmets might do very well for
 us, if we could be contented to become citizens of America, confuse the
 thirteen stripes, & change the stars into one glorious Sun.

William Symmes, Jr. to Peter Osgood, Jr., Andover, Mass.
 15 November 1787 (CC 2, 116)

OPPORTUNITY FROM HEAVEN

THE LAST TIME they would have an OPPORTUNITY!—From whom do
 they receive this OPPORTUNITY, but from Heaven?—And who shall with-
 hold the boon?

“An American,” Boston *American Herald*
 28 January 1788 (CC 3, 139)

THE ORIENT BEAMS OF THIS FEDERAL LUMINARY

Let time add speed to her wings, and bring quickly the orient beams of this Fœderal Luminary into our Hemisphere, which cannot fail of introducing us into our wished—for *melenium* state.

Boston *American Herald*, 19 November 1787 (RCS MASS., 278)

OUR POLAR STAR

The Federal Constitution is our polar Star—by that let us shape our course: Its free operation alone, can enable us to form a true estimate of its worth—“THE CONFIDENCE AND GOOD WILL OF THE PEOPLE” cannot in the nature of things, be *antecedent* to a fair experiment—*that* will ascertain its congeniality to our ideas and habits—and in that way only can we rationally determine its pernicious or salutary nature and influence.

“Antilocalis,” *Massachusetts Centinel*
27 December 1788 (RCS SUPPL. MASS., #968, p. 460)

RADIANT CONSTELLATION

Hail, radiant Constellation! spring of day,
Ye stars of magnitude in splendour rise!
Come, chase the night of discord far away,
And break the morn of peace to joyful eyes.

Federal Song, Connecticut *Litchfield Monitor*
29 September 1788 (RCS SUPPL. R.I., #218, p. 175)

RISING STAR

But now in view of this rising star, we may hail the auspicious day. Welcome happy morn, auspicious to our national happiness and peace.

“Social Compact,” *New Haven Gazette*
4 October 1788 (RCS CONN., 357; CC I, 311)

A RISING SUN

I have said he, often and often in the course of the Session, and the vicisitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that behind the President without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting.

But now at length I have the happiness to know that it is a rising and not a setting sun.

Benjamin Franklin's Final Remarks in the Philadelphia Convention
17 September 1787 (CC 1, 215)



ANECDOTE

The day on which the Convention agreed to the Constitution presented to the Public, the great Dr. Franklin asked a gentleman who sat next to him whether he had taken notice of the picture of the sun in the recess at the back of the President's chair?—He replied that he had, but not with a particular attention. The Doctor then observed that painters had been puzzled to paint a single sun in such a manner that the spectator could determine whether it was a rising or a setting sun,—he added that he had viewed the picture before mentioned as often as he had been in the Hall, and never had been able to come to a determination, but *now* he was sure it was a *rising sun*.

Newport Herald, 20 December 1787 (RCS SUPPL. R.I., #81, p. 76)

RISING SUN OF THE WESTERN WORLD

PUBLIC JUSTICE in its usual splendor, firmly fixed, shall mark the NEW FEDERAL CONSTITUTION as the rising SUN of the western world.

“The State Soldier” V (George Nicholas?), *Virginia Independent Chronicle*
2 April 1788 (RCS VA., 652)

THE SUN

There is a spirit of rivalship in power, which will not suffer two suns to shine in the same firmament, one will speedily darken the other, and the individual states will be as totally eclipsed, as the stars in the meridian blaze of the sun.

“An Old Whig” VI, *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*
24 November 1787 (CC 2, 218–19)



But compare the *Fæderal Constitution* with this *highly extolled government*, and you will find its excellencies eclipsed, like the faint lustre of the *moon*, by the dazzling splendor of the *sun*.

Virginia Independent Chronicle, 28 November 1787 (CC 2, 242)



The sun, the glorious luminary of the day, comes forth from his chambers of the East, and, rejoicing to run his course, carries light and heat and joy through the nations to the remotest parts of the West, and returns to the place from whence he came. In like manner divine truth, useful knowledge, and improvements appear to proceed in the same direction, until the bright day of science, virtue, pure religion, and free government, shall pervade this western hemisphere. The inspired writers, we have already seen, delight to speak of the propagation of Christianity, under this figure, as proceeding from the rising to the setting sun until incense shall be offered to the true God in every place.

Manasseh Cutler, Sermon, Marietta, Northwest Territory
24 August 1788 (CC 6, 341)

WORK FROM HEAVEN

While some have boasted it as a Work from Heaven others have given it a less righteous origin and charged it to the old great Devil. *Medio tutissimus ibis** I have many Reasons to believe that it was the Work of plain honest Men and such I think it will appear.

*You will go most safely in the middle.

Gouverneur Morris to James LaCaze, Williamsburg, Va.
21 February 1788 (CC 4, 171)