

CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY

ALPHA OR THE OMEGA

They are now called to announce the *Alpha* or the *Omega* of their political existence, to lay a deep foundation for their national character, and to leave a legacy of happiness or misery to their children's children.

"A Federal Republican," *A Review of the Constitution*
28 November 1787 (CC 2, 256)

COLOSSUS

View this Collosus attempting to grasp the commerce of America and meeting with a sudden repulse, in the midst of his immense career, receiving a shock that threatens his very existence.

"Centinel" VIII (Samuel Bryan), Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*
2 January 1788 (CC 3, 234)

COLOSSUS OF DESPOTISM

What compensation then are you to receive in return for the liberties and privileges belonging to yourselves and posterity, that you are now about to sacrifice at the altar of this *monster*, this *Colossus of despotism*.

"Philadelphiensis" IV (Benjamin Workman), Philadelphia *Freeman's Journal*
12 December 1787 (CC 2, 419)

"A Retailer of Scraps," Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*
1 April 1788 (RCS SUPPL. PA., #590, p. 1136)

CRANE—ALL-DEVOURING CRANE

The *present* federal government is, my fellow-citizens, the *Log* of the fable—the *Crane* is the system now offered to your acceptance.—I wish you not to *remain* under the government of the *one*, nor to *become subjected* to the tyranny of the *other*. . . . I think the *harmless, inoffensive*,

though *contemptible Log*, infinitely to be preferred to the *powerful*, the *efficient*, but *all-devouring Crane*.

Luther Martin: Address No. IV, *Maryland Journal*
4 April 1788 (RCS MD., 484; CC 5, 22)

DRACONIAN CODE

How many of the disinterested worthies who ventured every thing for the support of the rights of their country, and the liberties of mankind, will be left to adorn that assembly, who have ambitiously and daringly presumed (without any commission for that purpose) to annihilate the sovereignties of the thirteen United States; to establish a DRACONIAN CODE.

“Helvidius Priscus” I (James Warren?), Boston *Independent Chronicle*
27 December 1787 (RCS MASS., 536)



The assertion of PRISCUS, that the late Convention have “ambitiously and daringly” presumed to establish a “*Draconian Code*,” and to bind posterity by their “*secret Councils*,” is weak, wicked and false.

“Honorius,” Boston *Independent Chronicle*
3 January 1788 (RCS MASS., 604)

EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD

It may be very well added to the seven wonders of the world, and so be an eighth.

Providence *United States Chronicle*, 27 March 1788 (RCS R.I., 245)

GREAT COLOSSUS

Will the Convention of new York, who have it in their Power to stop the Career of Influence; permit the thirteen Pillars to be bent down, in Stead of being supported; and one great Collosus erected in the Room thereof which shall stand astride of all the States?

Joshua Atherton to John Lamb, Amherst, N.H.
23 June 1788 (CC 6, 52)

HERCULES' POISONED SHIRT

I have no security that they will not cling to my skin, tear away my flesh, break my bones, and boil my marrow, like Hercules's poisoned shirt, which insidiously destroyed him.

“Peter Prejudice” (Francis Hopkinson): The New Breeches
Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*, 15 April 1788 (CC 5, 129)

LAWS OF SOLON

Mr. Barnwell concluded by declaring that this constitution was, in his opinion, like the laws of Solon, not the best possible to be formed, but the best that our situation will admit of.

Robert Barnwell, Speech in the S.C. House of Representatives
17 January 1788 (RCS S.C., 133; RCS SUPPL. S.C., #II, p. 35)

LITTLE BETTER THAN A PANDORA'S BOX

This constitution, which I look upon as little better than a Pandora's box to our profession.

Spurious Luther Martin: Address No. V, Philadelphia *Federal Gazette*
10 April 1788 (CC 5, 72)

A MANY-HEADED HYDRA OF DESPOTISM

That system which was pompously displayed as the perfection of government, proves upon examination to be the most odious system of tyranny that was ever projected, a many headed hydra of despotism.

“Centinel” XII (Samuel Bryan), Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*
23 January 1788 (CC 3, 449)

MINERVA

Perfection, it has been often said, is not the lot of human nature, why then must this *Magna Charta* of American liberty be supposed to come at once into the world, like Minerva out of the head of Jupiter, in every respect finished and perfect?

Philadelphia *Freeman's Journal*, 10 October 1787
(RCS SUPPL. PA., #119, p. 288; RCS N.Y., 78)

PANDORA'S BOX

I observe we have our doubting, fearful, and procrastinating brethren; those who, in the profundity of their penetration, not from interested motives, but a laudable zeal to serve the public, have discovered, and pronounced the new proposed Fœderal Government to be of the illegitimate and monstrous kind, like Pandora's box, pregnant with every evil, full of design, a fatal tendency, and diametrically repugnant to the true interests, happiness, and safety of the United States.

"A Slave," *New York Journal*
25 October 1787 (RCS N.Y., 133–34; CC I, 480)



The supreme power of government ought to be *full, definite, established*, and *acknowledged*. Powers of government too limited, or uncertain and disputed, have ever proved, like *Pandora's* box, a most fruitful source of quarrels, animosities, wars, devastation, and ruin, in all shapes and degrees, in all communities, states, and kingdoms on earth.

"A Citizen of Philadelphia" (Pelatiah Webster)
The Weaknesses of Brutus Exposed, 8 November 1787 (CC 2, 65)



Like Pandora's box, in the objector's view, it is pregnant with every evil.

Hartford, Conn., *American Mercury*
21 January 1788 (RCS SUPPL. CONN., #75, p. 103)



The new constitution instead of being the panacea or cure of every grievance so delusively represented by its advocates will be found upon examination like Pandora's box, replete with every evil.

"Centinel" XVI (Samuel Bryan), *Philadelphia Independent Gazetteer*
26 February 1788 (CC 4, 218)



On the present occasion we would not hesitate to sacrifice our *lives* . . . to procure the rejection of this constitution, which I look upon as little better than a Pandora's box to our profession.

Spurious Luther Martin: Address No. V
Philadelphia Federal Gazette, 10 April 1788 (RCS MD., 502)

PHOENIX-LIKE

A gentleman in this town, a few days since, asked another what he thought of the *Constitution?* (*not the new one.*) The other replied, "It is like that of your humble servant, in a rotten condition; but I hope, Phoenix like, a better will soon rise out of its ashes."

New Jersey Journal, 25 June 1788 (CC 6, 383)

SATURNIAN AGE

JUSTICE and LAW, shall endless PEACE maintain,
And *the* "SATURNIAN AGE," *return again.*

Massachusetts Centinel, 2 August 1788 (RCS N.Y., 2439)

WONDERFUL COLOSSUS AT RHODES

It may be very well added to the seven wonders of the world, and so be an eighth. . . . That a set of men . . . should presume to present to the great tribunal of the public such a monster, that far exceeds the description of the wonderful Colossus at Rhodes . . . instead of holding a light-house in its hand, holds forth to the people the sword of tyranny.

Providence *United States Chronicle*, 27 March 1788 (RCS R.I., 245–46)

WOODEN HORSE OF TROY

It is to be lamented that the interested and designing have availed themselves so successfully of the present crisis, and under the specious pretence of having discovered a panacea for all the ills of the people, they are about establishing a system of government, that will prove more destructive to them, than the wooden horse filled with soldiers did in ancient times to the city of Troy.

"Centinel" IV (Samuel Bryan), Philadelphia *Independent Gazetteer*
30 November 1787 (CC 2, 320)