John Trumbull to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., London, 26 February 1788 (excerpt)

Mr. Adams however, has just published a third volume of his defence of American Constitutions. in which He very fully, & with a Manliness highly honorable to him declares his opinions;–opinions which I am afraid will have no tendency at this moment, to place him higher in the popular estimation, but which appear to me founded in reason & the principles of human nature:–He gives the most pointed approbation to the division of Power into three equal portions, & the distinction of rank, even of hereditary rank.–He doubts the possibility of Elections to the highest Offices, being conducted for any number of years, without degenerating into scenes of corruption & tumult:–where domestic dissension will be fomented by foreign gold: & where the strength not of numbers but of Arms may decide the Choice.–

For my own part, I conceive that all Nations have & ever have had very nearly that form of Government which is best suited to their Manners & information & Merits:–I doubt not therefore but we shall continue to enjoy precisely as good a Constitution as we deserve, that supposing the present propos'd form to take place, we shall have the spirit to reform as many errors as we may have good sense to discover—& that after having made use of Elections as long as they are consonant with the state of our Morals:–we shall in the progress of our Existence pass thro' the various stages of encreasing power to that last stage when all other Empires have sunk.–where the governors are all, & the governed nothing.…