

Pennsylvania Herald, 19 May 1787

Various opinions are propagated respecting the probable result of the fœderal convention; but, whatever means are pursued, it seems to be unanimously agreed, that a strong and efficient executive power must be somewhere established. How widely different would have been the character of the union, if in Congress had resided a power to controul the selfish interests of a single state, and to compel the sacrifice of partial views, in order to promote the common weal. The depravity of individuals, not checked by physical obligation, will indeed taint the complexion of society; and if those vices that corrupt the heart, did not extinguish the virtues of citizens, even Rome, which is now no more, would still have existed. In considering then, what form of government is best calculated to promote the principles of universal justice, probity and honor (which, after all, must be the source of national strength as well as happiness) fatal experience will instruct us that little can be left to the voluntary disposition of the people. Whether the shattered fabric of the original constitution is to be repaired and enlarged, or a new and stately building erected upon the old foundation,—whether, on the one hand, the vast continent is to be distributed into distinct republics, or, on the other, the majesty of a world, centered in an individual, are questions that respect only the forms and not the objects of government; for there are immutable laws in civil societies, independant of times, places and circumstances: and let theorists establish what principles they please in the three sorts of government we are acquainted with, by making virtue the spring of the republican, honor the source of the monarchical, and fear the basis of the despotic,—if these do not lead the people of each government into virtuous manners the whole is nothing but a political romance.

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