

Philo-Musæ, *Massachusetts Centinel*, 2 January 1788

Mr. Russell, It is said were human nature at once to be annihilated—another race of beings might, from the works of *Shakespear* alone, form a compleat idea of the nature and manners of mankind. I think, Mr. Printer, a similar remark might in some measure be applied to our inimitable M’Fingal, where we find most excellent strokes of satire suited to every class of men. For instance now, when I cast my eyes over the railings of the antifederalists, who expect that *places* will be lessened if the Federal Constitution is adopted—the lines of *Trumbull* forthwith pop themselves in my mind—where the hero makes his patriots.

“Cry *liberty* with powerful yearning
As he does fire, whose house is burning.”

How prettily, and justly, some of our antifederalists are described in these words—

“While ev’ry dunce, that turns the plains,
Though *bankrupt* in estate and brains.
Starts an harrang’ing chief of whigs,
To drag us by the ears like pigs.
Each leather-apron’d clown grown wise,
Presents his forward face t’ advise.
And tatter’d legislators meet,
From ev’ry work-shop in the street.
His goose the taylor finds new use in,
To *patch* and turn the Constitution:
The blacksmith comes with sledge and grate,
To iron bind the wheels of state,
And *quacks* forbear their patient’s souse
To purge the Senate and the House.”

I am no party man, Sir, and am only contending for the American Poet. Yours,

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