

THE  
DEBATES  
IN THE SEVERAL  
STATE CONVENTIONS  
ON THE ADOPTION OF THE  
FEDERAL CONSTITUTION,  
AS RECOMMENDED BY THE  
GENERAL CONVENTION AT PHILADELPHIA,  
IN  
1787.  
TOGETHER WITH THE  
JOURNAL OF THE FEDERAL CONVENTION,  
LUTHER MARTIN'S LETTER,  
YATES'S MINUTES,  
CONGRESSIONAL OPINIONS,  
VIRGINIA AND KENTUCKY RESOLUTIONS OF '98-99,  
AND  
OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION  
IN FIVE VOLUMES.  
VOL. IV.

SECOND EDITION, WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS.

COLLECTED AND REVISED FROM CONTEMPORARY PUBLICATIONS,  
By JONATHAN ELLIOT.

PUBLISHED UNDER THE SANCTION OF CONGRESS.

---

PHILADELPHIA:  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY.  
1888.

of the people. Why, then, enter so largely in argument on its merits, when the ultimate decision depended on another body? Mr. Rutledge then took up an argument relative to treaties not being paramount to the laws of the land. Was not the last treaty contrary to the Declaratory Act, and a great number of other acts of Parliament? Yet who ever doubted its validity? The gentleman had declared that his sentiments were so much in contradiction to the voice of his constituents, that he did not expect to be appointed a member of the Convention. Mr. Rutledge hoped he would be appointed, and did not hesitate to pledge himself to prove, demonstrably, that all those grounds on which he dwelt so much amounted to nothing more than mere declamation; that his boasted Confederation was not worth a farthing; and that, if Mr. Chairman was intrenched in such instruments up to his chin, they would not shield him from one single national calamity. So far from thinking that the sun of this country was obscured by the 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. The gentleman's obstinacy brought to his recollection a friend to this country, once a member of that house, who said, "It is generally imputed to me that I am obstinate. This is a mistake. I am not so, but sometimes hard to be convinced."

Hon. PATRICK CALHOUN, of *Ninety-six*, made some observations on the too great latitude allowed in religion.

Hon. JAMES LINCOLN, of *Ninety-six*, declared, that if ever any person rose in a public assembly with diffidence, he then did; if ever any person felt himself deeply interested in what he thought a good cause, and at the same time lamented the want of abilities to support it, it was he. On a question on which gentlemen, whose abilities would do honor to the senate of ancient Rome, had enlarged with so much eloquence and learning, who could venture without anxiety and diffidence? He had not the vanity to oppose his opinion to such men; he had not the vanity to suppose he could place this business in any new light; but the justice he owed to his constituents — the justice he owed to his own feelings, which would perhaps upbraid him hereafter, if he indulged himself so far as to give merely a silent vote on this great question — impelled him, reluctantly impelled him, to intrude

himself on the house. He had, for some years past, turned his thoughts towards the politics of this country; he long since perceived that not only the federal but the state Constitution required much the hand of correction and revision. They were both formed in times of confusion and distress, and it was a matter of wonder they were so free from defects as we found them. That they were imperfect, no one would deny; and that something must be done to remedy those imperfections, was also evident; but great care should be taken that, by endeavoring to do some good, we should not do an infinite deal of mischief. He had listened with eager attention to all the arguments in favor of the Constitution; but he solemnly declared that the more he heard, the more he was persuaded of its evil tendency. What does this proposed Constitution do? It changes, totally changes, the form of your present government. From a well-digested, well-formed democratic, you are at once rushing into an aristocratic government. What have you been contending for these ten years past? Liberty! What is liberty? The power of governing yourselves. If you adopt this Constitution, have you this power? No: you give it into the hands of a set of men who live one thousand miles distant from you. Let the people but once trust their liberties out of their own hands, and what will be the consequence? First, a haughty, imperious aristocracy; and ultimately, a tyrannical monarchy. No people on earth are, at this day, so free as the people of America. All other nations are, more or less, in a state of slavery. They owe their constitutions partly to chance, and partly to the sword; but that of America is the offspring of their choice — the darling of their bosom: and was there ever an instance in the world that a people in this situation, possessing all that Heaven could give on earth, all that human wisdom and valor could procure — was there ever a people so situated, as calmly and deliberately to convene themselves together for the express purpose of considering whether they should give away or retain those inestimable blessings? In the name of God, were we a parcel of children, who would cry and quarrel for a hobby-horse, which, when we were once in possession of, we quarrel with and throw it away? It is said this Constitution is an experiment; but all regular-bred physicians are cautious of experiments. If the constitution be crazed a