

They meet the world with bold assertion strong,  
 And hold it fast—be the fact right or wrong,  
 Few are the exceptions—through the seventeen States,  
 To this same rule, in all their best debates.

Here selfish passions fill the seat of law,  
 These 'gainst the truth, with wicked bias draw,  
 Towards that end, their interest may require, (3)  
 Or to glut vengeance, or appease desire ;  
 Truth is not cherish'd in a venal State,  
 Justice is smother'd, with insulting prate ;  
 Law has no pow'r e'en criminals to bind,  
 Law is the will of every Ruler's mind,  
 And while base falsehood loads the theme of pow'r,  
 Interest and fraud will honesty devour ;  
 When untaught ignorance is plac'd to rule,  
 Pow'r gives an ample field to play the fool ;  
 Despots dwell here—in every paltry town,  
 Who pull the sacred rights of freedom down ;  
 " Like dogs in office," domineer with pride ;  
 What is that pow'r, which honor cannot guide,  
 Nor moral rectitude—nor holy right?  
 'Tis hateful darkness, hiding Heav'nly light.

Oh happy England—while this theme I trace,  
 The stream of sorrow steals adown my face.  
 How art thou palsied—how art thou employ'd,  
 That in thy justice there appears a void ? (4)  
 Know'st thou in prisons dire thy sons are bound,  
 In loathsome cells, stretch'd on the filthy ground ?  
 Confin'd for wretches, born without a name,  
 Whom this base government pretend to claim ?