

Anonymous, "An Invocation to Poverty"

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ANONYMOUS

*An INVOCATION to POVERTY. By an HONOURABLE COMMONER,
After the Reflection on his PENURY, thrown out in the House of Commons last Sessions.*

Oh! *Poverty!* of pale, consumptive hue,
If thou delight'st to haunt me, still in view;
If still thy presence must my steps attend,
At least continue as thou art — my Friend!
When Scotch example bids me be unjust, 5
False to my word — or faithless to my trust,
Bid me the baneful error quickly see,
And shun the world, to find Repose with thee;
When Vice to Wealth would turn my partial eye,
Or Int'rest shut my ear to Sorrow's cry, 10
Or Courtier's custom would my reason bend,
My Foe to flatter, — or desert my Friend:
Oppose, kind *Poverty*, thy temper'd shield,
And bear me off unvanquish'd from the field.
If giddy Fortune e'er return again, 15
With all her idle — restless, wanton train, —
Her magic glass should false Ambition hold,
Or Av'rice bid me put my trust in Gold,
To my relief, thou virtuous Goddess, haste,
And with thee bring thy daughters ever chaste, 20
Health! Liberty! and Wisdom! sisters bright,
Whose charms can make the worst condition light,
Beneath the hardest fate the mind can cheer,
Can heal Affliction — and disarm Despair!
In chains, in torments, pleasure can bequeath, 25
And dress in smiles the tyrant hour of *Death!*

NOTES:

Title *Honourable Commoner* Someone not born of nobility, but who possesses nobility; *Penury* Poverty; *House of Commons* The lower house of England's legislative branch.

1 *Consumptive* Pale, as if dying of tuberculosis.

5 *Scotch* The Scottish people.

8 *Repose* Rest.

11 *Courtier* Attendant of the royal court.

Source: *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 46 (September 1776), p. 428.

Edited by George Griffith

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