

MS. Eng. misc. c. 898, fols.25-6

fol.25r

Lines inspired by the Lord Chancellor's  
Speech on the second reading [of] the Libel prevention Bill

Britons! the greatest beauty of your laws  
Know and enjoy!—Oh hear with just applause  
Your learned Chancellor in form declare  
Those birth-right blessings you so proudly share.

“The beauty of our law is,— all may take  
“The law quite wrong, and live by the mistake;  
“To each case granted latitude of ill  
“Juries may err, miscarry, if they will,  
“Judge yeoman, witness, coroner and all,  
“Princes, and magistrates, and great and small,  
“All persons who their lawful duties do,  
“May do their duties—and miscarry too”

Indemnity, with royal touch, of course  
Will cure the evil of malignant force;  
The matter of sedition take away,  
And give the Constitution still fair play.  
What though Sedition's monstrous amber'd line  
No eye can follow and no hand define,

Varying

fol.25v

Varying with every change of place—of light  
And now too large, and now too small for sight!  
Yet trust the jury's knowledge of the crime  
Oh! grant the power to punish, and the time;  
Trust to the Judge's soft-eyed mercy still,  
Extreme of justice, is extreme of ill.  
And though, no more the patriotic wit  
May write, as Somers, or as Dryden writ;  
Silence is pleased, & silence is secured  
By {tight} plugged libel bill, five years ensured  
— So when the danger roars th' {intemp'rate clown}  
Stamps on the safety-valves to keep them down.  
Secure the sacred freedom of the press  
And still the subject finds his sure redress  
For <still> a British Senator we find  
May speak (not print) the dictates of his mind,  
Men in two honored houses at their ease  
May talk what nonsense, or what sense they please;  
Sedition there, and Libel, lose their name  
There Truth & eloquence may lead to fame!

fol.26r

He did not mean to say there were not particular cases when juries might not miscarry — No — one of the great beauties of the British Constitution was that all persons might miscarry in performing their duties — or in other words great latitude was allowed them.

See the Lord Chancellors Speech on the second reading of the Libel prevention Bill.

as reported in the Times paper of Dec. 7 1819

This is the surplus copy several were sent by the post about the above date to members.

fol.26v

On the

Chancellor's speech

"All may Miscarry"