A Fair Bargain
Philadelphia *American Museum*, August 1788

A fair bargain.

As Satan was taking and airing one day,
Columbia's fair genius fell plump in his way,
Array'd like a goddess, and blooming as May:
"Vile Monster," said she, "you oppose me in vain,
My people shall surely their wishes obtain;
You can but perplex us, and so mark the end on't,
For, sooner or later, they'll be independent."
"What you say," quoth the fiend, "I confess is too true:
But why not allow the poor devil his due?
Give me *one* of your states, and the rest shall be free
To follow their fate, unmolested by me."
"Agreed," said the lady, "if that's all you want,
Here take and enjoy it—it is my Vermont."
"Oh! ho!" exclaim'd Satan, "how gen'rous you're grown,
So kindly to give—what's already my own!
So thank you for nothing, fair lady, I trow,
The devil is not to be bamboozled so.
Come—down with your dust—you know what I mean
I must have at least *one* of your fav'rite *thirteen*."
A tear in her eye, and a sigh from her breast,
The doubts and the fears of the genius confest;
But while she was puzzled, unable to find
Which state might with ease be to Satan resign'd,
The five per cent. impost-law popt in her mind.
This settled the point—she look'd up with a smile, and
Presented his fiendship the state of Rhode Island.
He seiz'd the fair prize—cram'd it into his pocket,
And darted away in a blaze, like a rocket.

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