



# CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTION

csac.history.wisc.edu > Document Collections > Popular Culture and Ratification > Poetry  
and Songs

## The News-Mongers' Song for the Winter of 1788 *Albany Gazette*, 15 November 1787

Good news, brother dealers in metre & prose!  
The world has turn'd *buffer* and coming to blows;  
Write *good sense* or *non sense*, my boys, it's all one,  
All persons may fire when the battle's begun.  
*Down, down, down derry down.*

Our tutors and sages would oftentimes say,  
"Sit omnibus hora,"<sup>1</sup> each dog has his day:  
Queen Ann's was the æra of genius 'tis known,  
Arguendo<sup>2</sup> this day is for scribblers alone.  
*Down, down &c.*

Now *Claxton & Babcock* and *Webster* and *Stoddard*,  
*Hall, Sellers, Childs, London, Oswald, Morton* and *Goddard*  
*Russell, Haswell, Green, Thomas, Meigs, Powers* and *Draper*<sup>3</sup>  
May thank the kind stars for such luck to their paper.  
*Down, down, &c.*

Come on brother scribblers, 'tis idle to lag.  
The CONVENTION has let the cat out of the bag,  
Write something at randum, you need not be nice.  
*Public spirit, Montesquieu, and great Dr. Price,*  
*Down, down, &c.*

Talk of *Holland & Greece*, and of *purses & swords*,  
Democratical mobs and congressional Lords:  
Tell what is surrendered and what is enjoy'd,  
All things weigh alike, boys, we know, in a void.  
*Down, down, &c.*

Much joy, brother printers! the day is our own,  
A time like the present sure never was known:  
Predictions are making—predictions fulfil,  
All nature seems proud to bring grist to our mill.

*Down, down, &c.*

Huge Comets once more thro' the system will stroll,  
The Moon, they inform us is burnt to a coal;  
Old Saturn is tumbling—the Sun has a spot,  
The world and its glory are going to pot.

*Down, down, &c.*

All *Europe*, we hear, is in horrible pother,  
They jockey, they bully and kill one another:  
In *Holland*, where freedom is lustily bawling,  
All's fighting and swearing, and pulling & ha[u]ling.

*Down, down, &c.*

The *Empress* and *Poland* fresh mischief are carving,  
The *Porte* is in motion, and *Ireland* is starving,  
While the *Dey of Algiers*, sirs, so haughty is grown,  
That he swears by the prophet, the WORLD'S all his own.

*Down, down, &c.*

In *England*, blest island!<sup>4</sup> what wonders we view,  
NORTH blind as a bat,<sup>5</sup> Lord GEORGE GORDON a Jew;<sup>6</sup>  
Or halters or peerage on HASTINGS<sup>7</sup> await,  
And faction *pro more*, dismembers the state.

*Down down, &c.*

PRINCE GEORGE<sup>8</sup> has relinquish'd the *stews* for the *church*,  
And struts like a true-blue in Solomon's porch:<sup>9</sup>  
Corruption pervades thro' both country and town,  
And the tune of the nation is *Down derry down*

*Down, down &c.*

We bid Europe farewell, the Atlantic is past,  
O free born COLUMBIA you're welcome at last!  
Hail *Congress*, *Conventions*, *Mobs*, *Shayites* & *Kings*,  
With *Bankrupts* & *Know ye's*, & all pretty things!

*Down, down, &c.*

The state's had a fall and received a contusion,  
And all things are tumbled in jumbled confusion:  
State quacks and state midwives are huddling all round,  
But in spite of their drugs we go *Down derry down*.

*Down; down, &c.*

Write then, brother scribblers, your talents display,  
This world is a *stage* and man's life is a play;<sup>10</sup>  
When the curtain is drawn and the ranting is o'er,  
Kings, heroes and waiters are equal once more.

*Down, down, &c.*

Old Time, with his brass-eating teeth shall consume,  
The works of a *Homer*, a *Newton*, a *Hume*;  
And who, when all things are consumed by Old Time,  
Can tell but we scribblers were writers sublime?

*Down, down, down derry down.*

1. Latin: All in good time.
2. Latin: for the sake of argument. (Used in the law.)
3. Those named here were newspaper printers from Vermont to Maryland.
4. William Shakespeare, *Richard II*.
5. A reference to Lord North who began losing his sight in early 1787 and who soon became totally blind.
6. Lord George Gordon was the leader of the Protestant riots in London that erupted in opposition to toleration for Roman Catholics. He had recently converted to Judaism.
7. Warren Hastings had been governor general of India.
8. George Augustus Frederick, Prince of Wales, who became George IV.
9. Solomon's porch was attached to the original temple built by Solomon. It was the porch of judgment, where Solomon rendered judgments and exercised justice.
10. William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*.

CITE AS: John P. Kaminski et al., eds., *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*, Vol. XIX: New York [1] (Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2003), 249–51.