

# THE BEST OF THE OLL #69

*JOHN THELWALL, "POLITICAL SONGS" (1795)*

[oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2671](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2671)

*“Then the next of our blessings, As you know, my good  
neighbour, Are millions of taxes, For which millions  
must labour: Yet hold!—Faith, in these good days A  
better way we learn, yet, And continue to pay the tax,  
With no trade to earn it. O! the golden days, &c.”*



**John Thelwall (1764-1834)**

*The Best of the Online Library of Liberty* [oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2465](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2465)

*The Best of Bastiat* [oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2477](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2477)

[February, 2015]

## Editor's Introduction

John Thelwall (1764-1834) was a radical English journalist and writer who supported the ideals of the French Revolution and sought similar political reforms in Britain, such as universal suffrage, annual elections for Parliament, and freedom of association. He was a member of the London Corresponding Society, joining in 1792, and served time in prison for his political activities. He, Horne Tooke, and Thomas Hardy were tried for treason in 1794 but were acquitted and released. Thelwall eventually retired from politics to found a school of elocution and rhetoric which was quite successful.

Thelwall gave many lectures for the London Corresponding Society and at their meetings political songs were sung. They, along many poems by him and others, were published in his magazine *The Tribune* which appeared during 1795. We include here a political ode and three political songs which were published in the first volume of his collected editorials and essays. The first is his "Ode on the Destruction of the Bastille" in which he celebrates the fall of the prison of Bastille in Paris as a symbol of the snapping of "the Gallic yoke in twain". and he reminds his listeners that the French are now striving for the liberty which Britons had enjoyed for centuries. The first political song was sung at a meeting of the London Corresponding Society, "News from Toulon", to celebrate the French republican victory at the siege of Toulon over a British expeditionary force at the end of 1793. The second is an amusing song about politicians who "shear" the taxpayers like so many sheep, while the third is a witty satire mocking "the blessings" of a constitution which imposes such heavy taxes on the people, restricts freedom of the press, employs so many lawyers and priests at taxpayer's expence, and fights wars against French liberty.

*"But these are petty sheerers all,  
And fleece a little flock;  
Behold where haughty ministers  
Fleece the whole nations stock:  
The while pretended patriots,  
A still more venal race,  
With liberty and bawling cant,  
Would fleece them of their place—  
When a fleecing they, &c.*

*But cease ye fleecing senators  
Your country to undo—  
Or know we British Sans Cullottes  
Hereafter may fleece you,  
For well we know if tamely thus  
We yield our wool like drones  
Ye will not only fleece our backs,  
By God you'll pick our bones—  
When a fleecing ye, &c.*

*Since then, we every rank and state  
May justly fleecers call,  
And since Corruption's venal pack  
Would fleece us worse than all,  
May we Oppression's out-stretch'd sheers  
With dauntless zeal defy,  
Resolv'd fair Freedom's golden fleece  
To vindicate or die.  
When a fleecing they do go."*

*“Political Songs” (1795)<sup>1</sup>*

**Ode "On the Destruction of the Bastille" (THE TRIBUNE, No. I. Saturday, 14th March, 1795)**

The following Ode occasioned by the first of those splendid events that distinguished the commencement of the French Revolution, was the earliest political production of the Lecturer. As a public speaker he had interested himself in the party questions of the day; and displayed his zeal in the discussions upon the slave trade—(discussions which so happily prepared the minds of Britons for the reception of those great truths which the investigation provoked by events upon the Continent brought to light) but his Muse had never before been enlisted under the banners of political liberty. The poem was inserted in one of the periodical publications of the day; but has never made its appearance in any collection of the author’s works—

**Ode "On the Destruction of the Bastille."**

Now Science, by thy genial beam,  
Awaken’d from the torpid dream  
Of bigot Ignorance and servile fear,  
Her awful brow, lo, Freedom rear!—  
See her hand, with generous rage,  
From sable limbs the shackles rends;  
Afric’s wrongs her cares assuage,  
And Hope, a long lost guest, to Ethiop’s race descends!  
Then as indignant round she turns  
And snaps the Gallic yoke in twain,  
(While her patriot bosom burns  
With generous rage, and just disdain)  
The flashing fires her eyes indignant shed  
Shake the proud tyrants of the earth with dread!  
Shall then no Muse, with generous aim,  
Wide diffuse the sacred flame?  
And shall not, chief, the patriot theme inspire  
The raptures of the British lyre?  
Yes, Britons, yes—this artless hand,  
While bright the inspiring ardour glows,

The shell of Freedom shall command,  
Indignant of Oppression’s countless woes!—  
Yes, Britons,—Freedom’s magic shell,  
Sacred of old in Britain’s isle,

This hand, with trembling touch, shall swell,  
Nor ask a laurel for my toil—  
Blest should my wild notes thro’ one bosom roll  
The genuine ardours of the freeborn soul!  
From Tyranny’s insatiate sway  
What Woes, what coward crimes prevail!  
How generous courage dies away,  
While Anguish sobs in every gale?  
Cross but one narrow creek of raging waves,  
Set but thy foot on Gallia’s bleeding shore,  
Where bold Resistance proud Oppression braves,  
Who sinks despairing to revive no more;  
There see (and seeing, smile with generous pride)  
Where, on the ruins of her noble rage,  
Freedom, enthron’d by Patriot Valour’s side,  
Seeks a brave people’s sorrows to assuage.  
Say—rolls not then the agitated eye—  
Does shuddering Nature no wild terrors feel,  
When, with Reflection’s retrospective sigh,  
Thou view’st what once was call’d the dread Bastille?  
There sullen Tyranny, in murky cell,  
With spleen-born Cruelty, and ruthless Pride,  
Hid from all human pity loved to dwell,  
To coin new torments, and new woes provide.  
There loathsome Horror, from the dark, dank cave,  
Breath’d rank infection round the victim’s head:—  
—— Perhaps, because his virtue, nobly brave!  
Awak’d the guilty tyrant’s jealous dread:  
Perhaps because his manly tongue was warm  
To plead the cause of Innocence opprest;  
Or from the rage of power, with filial arm,  
He dar’d defend a Sire’s devoted breast:  
Perhaps, because the child his cares had nurst,  
Or the fond partner of his nuptial flame  
Had wak’d some pamper’d menial’s sordid lust—  
And he refus’d the proffer’d bribe of shame.

Nay not these vile pretexts does it require  
To urge the wrong, the cruel malice screen,

<sup>1</sup> Ode "On the Destruction of the Bastille" <[http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651\\_head\\_008](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651_head_008)>; "News from Toulon; or, The Men of Gotham’s Expedition" <[http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651\\_head\\_051](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651_head_051)>; "A Sheepsheering Song" <[http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651\\_head\\_059](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651_head_059)>; "Britain’s Glory; or, The Blessings of a good Constitution" <[http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651\\_head\\_091](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651_head_091)>, in John Thelwall, *The Tribune, A Periodical Publication, consisting chiefly of the Political Lectures of J. Thelwall. Taken in Short-hand by W. Ramsey and revised by the Lecturer* (London: Printed for the Author, 1795).

Enough if caprice, or suspicion fire  
 The booby monarch, or his strumpet queen!  
 Think the vile tools of arbitrary sway,  
 With all their tyrant's noxious power array'd,  
 Seizing the wretched victim ye survey:  
 Of guilt unconscious—yet with fear dismay'd.  
 Hark! does not fancy hear the shrieking wife,  
 The frantic parent, and the clinging child?  
 Each bosom torn with passion's painful strife!—  
 Must guiltless sorrow feel a pang so wild?  
 'Tis past—The prison opes its gloomy door,  
 Deep—deep the ruffians plunge their victim down:  
 Heaven's common light—heaven's breath is now no  
 more:

Despair and darkness all his senses drown.  
 Chill Horror creep thro' every vein,  
 And frenzy racks the giddy brain,  
 While (ere it close, to ope, perhaps, no more)  
 Sullen creeks the iron door.  
 See the loath'd abhorrent cave—  
 Helpless Virtue's living grave!  
 There sits Disease midst filth-born vapours vile;  
 Disease that knows no cheering smile;  
 While, trickling down the murky walls,  
 The aguish fiend Infection crawls.  
 “Den of Horrors!—Cave of woe!  
 Emblem of the realms below!”  
 “Why ope to me its death-denouncing jaws?—  
 Why frowns it thus on Misery's guiltless son?—  
 I never broke my Country's sacred laws!—  
 I am no murderer!—Ruffians! I am none.”  
 But ah the creaking doors remorseless close,  
 Light, and the soul's best light, soft hope, is fled.  
 Year after year he broods o'er lingering woes:—  
 To all but horror and reflection dead.  
 Yet walls, nor bars, nor deep descending cave  
 Shut a loved consort from his aching sight:  
 Her pictured sorrows find him in his grave;  
 Haunt his long days, and scourge the restless night.

There too his babes, in wakeful vision rise—  
 Pale images of want and friendless woe!  
 To pierce his soul with unavailing cries,  
 And bid afresh the floods of anguish flow.  
 “Ah save them—save!” he cries in vild despair  
 “My wife—my babes—Ah how could they offend?  
 Me with your racks—your wildest tortures tear:  
 But oh! to them your pitying succour lend.  
 'Tis Phantom all—Ah! restless train

Creations of the frantic brain,  
 Depart—depart—  
 Oblivion come—and o'er my aching head  
 Thy opiate-dripping pinions spread;  
 Sole hope—sole soother of this bleeding heart!  
 Alas! while thus perturbed fancy's sting  
 Aids the proud fury of a tyrant King,  
 What added pangs may yet remain!  
 For what can tyrant cruelty restrain?  
 The ruffian grasp that stops the labouring breath;  
 The dire suspension from the torturing beam;  
 Famine that slowly wastes the vital stream:  
 And all the ghastly train of lingering death!  
 Hark!—Sure the tread of bustling strife!  
 What added torments now?  
 Or what new victim doom'd to waste his life  
 In griefs like those beneath whose weight I bow?  
 Heavens! what sounds are these I hear?  
 Sure the pealing voice of Joy!  
 Again!—Again!—The shout comes near!  
 Liberty the glorious cry!”  
 'Tis so: and see the dungeon's bars are broke,  
 And cheerful light pervades the horrid gloom;  
 Awakening Gaul shakes off the servile yoke,  
 And, freed from slavish awe, her patriot honours  
 bloom!

*“Heavens! what sounds are these I hear?*

*Sure the pealing voice of Joy!*

*Again!—Again!—The shout comes near!*

*Liberty the glorious cry!”*

*'Tis so: and see the dungeon's bars are broke,*

*And cheerful light pervades the horrid*

*gloom;*

*Awakening Gaul shakes off the servile yoke,*

*And, freed from slavish awe, her patriot*

*honours bloom!”*

**"News from Toulon; or, The Men of Gotham's Expedition" (THE TRIBUNE, No. VII. Saturday, 25th April, 1795)**

The world is by this time pretty well acquainted with some of the juggling theatrical tricks which were played off, with such unavailing effrontery, during the late trials. Few of these, perhaps, were more disgraceful to the managers of the prosecution than that which related to the following Bagatelles. Three songs, printed upon one sheet of paper, were produced in Court, with great solemnity, by the counsel for the prosecution, upon Hardy's trial; which were proved to have been written and published by me, and sung at the London Corresponding Society. Neither of these songs were, however, read, although Mr. Erskine humorously pressed the prosecutors to amuse the Court with them, as they might enliven them after the dull business they had been obliged to toil through. But in the course of the examinations frequent allusions were made to, and verses quoted, not from these, but from songs of a sanguinary and censurable description; and thus the Court was left to suppose, and many persons, both in and out of Court did suppose, that those bloodthirsty stanzas were the production of my pen. The fact is, that no sentiment of that description ever was sent into the world from me: unless, indeed, the ludicrous story of the Game Cock (a narrative founded in fact, and repeated in the warmth of debate, to shew the difference between muscular and voluntary motion), can be considered as an exception.

The same artifice was again played off, in part, upon my trial. The songs were again produced, with their former solemnity, and proved to have been sold at my Lecture Room; but immediately laid by in silence, notwithstanding the admonition of my Counsel, "What, the Songs are not to be read." The sanguinary quotations were not, however repeated; it appearing, perhaps, better to trust to the general impression already spread abroad, than to hazard the unravelling of the plot by necessitating me to demand that my songs should be read.

I shall make no comment on this proceeding. It requires none. But, considering the opinion that has been sent abroad, it is, perhaps an act of justice to myself and to society, to reprint these Songs, that the public may see how far they support the character so insidiously given to them.

**SONG I. News from Toulon; or, The Men of Gotham's Expedition. Sung at the Globe Tavern, at the General Meeting of the London Corresponding Society.**

SILENCE, men of Gotham all, in country, court and city,  
With drooping hearts and downcast eyes, attend unto my ditty,  
A ditty all so sad and strange, from Toulon late I brought it,  
And sure you ought to love it dear, for dearly you have bought it.  
Hum! hum! hum!

The burthen of my song is a wondrous transformation,  
That late (by hocus pocus sure) befel a neighbouring nation,  
For while Bastilles were tumbling down, and palaces of Neroes,  
Lo! a Swinish Multitude were chang'd to men and heroes.  
Hum! hum! hum!

There Soldiers, hir'd to cut the throats of those whom they protected,  
Transform'd to zealous Citizens, the Court's commands rejected;  
While Lawyers (wondrous strange to tell!) to honest men converted,  
Plac'd Reason on the seats of Law, and quirks and fees deserted.  
Hum! hum! hum!

There cloister'd Monks, who dream'd and pray'd, with shaven skulls so bare, Sirs,  
Transform'd to useful lab'ers, itch no more in shirts of hair, Sirs,  
E'en Priests their holy frauds forsake, the public weal to plan, Sirs,  
And chaste and pious Nuns demand to learn the rights of man, Sirs.  
Hum! hum! hum!

There Superstition's temples too—(but hush! I fear 'tis treason!

Are chang'd to temples (strange indeed!) of liberty and  
reason!  
While crucifixes, relics, shrines, apostles, saint, and  
martyr,  
These sans culottes (oh! impious dogs!) for beef and  
brandy barter.  
Hum! hum! hum!

Oh! woeful Times! when schemes like these can  
madden every brain, Sirs,  
When priests, saints, lords and ministers come  
tumbling down amain, Sirs;  
Then those who've plunder'd long the land, alas!  
refund their riches,  
That every villain Sans-culotte may get a pair of  
breeches—  
Hum! hum! hum!

But woe, alas! not here can stop the renovating fury,  
But Kings and Princes, Queens and Lords must bow to  
judge and jury;  
Nay, little Capet, so 'twas said, since changes went so  
fast, Sirs,  
Must cobble up his royal thoughts, and labour at his  
last, Sirs.  
Hum! hum! hum!

This news to Gotham late arrived, when her wise men  
assembled,  
While pensioners were struck aghast, and every  
placeman trembled;  
“To arms!” cries each Aristocrate, “for if the tempest  
gathers,  
They'll slay us all, and tan our hides, to furnish upper  
leathers.”  
Hum! hum! hum!

A mighty man, and mighty mighty fleet, then sought a  
mighty harbour;  
He came, saw, conquer'd—Gotham's Chiefs declar'd it  
quite the barber.  
Then thus says he “To France at large I bring most  
glorious news, Sirs;  
For Louis, by my NOSE I swear! shall never cobble  
shoes, Sirs.”  
Hum! hum! hum!

But, ah! those base-born sans culottes kick'd up a  
mighty riot,

Nor man of Gotham, Naples, Spain, could sleep a  
night in quiet:  
The panic seiz'd on man and beast, of terror all were  
full, Sirs;  
And e'en his Popeship's cows and calves were silent as  
his BULL, Sirs.  
Hum! hum! hum!

Thus while the rout and ruin reign, which nothing  
could controul, Sirs,  
Each would himself a Cobler be, might he but save his  
soul, Sirs;  
Nay, Gotham's Captain, while the balls were whizzing  
in his ears, Sirs,  
Began to think he was not like to live a thousand years,  
Sirs.  
Hum! hum! hum!

Thus ends, the woeful tale, good friends, of Gotham's  
expedition;  
A tale must fill each loyal breast with sorrow's sharp  
attrition,  
And so God save kings, priests, and lords, and princes  
altogether,  
And shield them, in these changeful times, from  
lapstones, lasts, and leather.  
Hum! hum! hum!

*“Oh! woeful Times! when schemes like  
these can madden every brain, Sirs,  
When priests, saints, lords and ministers  
come tumbling down amain, Sirs;  
Then those who've plunder'd long the  
land, alas! refund their riches,  
That every villain Sans-culotte may get a  
pair of breeches—  
Hum! hum! hum!”*

**"A Sheepsheering Song" (THE TRIBUNE,  
No. VIII. Saturday, 2d May, 1795)**

A SHEEPSHEERING SONG.

COME to a song of rustic growth  
List all my jolly hearers,  
Whose moral plainly tends to prove  
That all the world are sheerers,  
How shepherds sheer their silly sheep,  
How statesmen sheer the state,  
And all when they can shear no more  
Are sheer'd themselves by fate.  
Then a sheering we will go, &c.

The farmer sends his clippers forth,  
And deems it not a sin  
To shear the lambhog of his fleece,  
And sometimes snip his skin,  
Then if his landlord rack-rents him,  
Can he deem it unfair  
That he thus, in his turn, again,  
Is snipp'd and fleec'd as bare.  
Then a fleecing, &c.

Nor is the wealthy landlord's self  
Of fleecing free from fears;  
How oft his rent-roll shrinks beneath  
His steward's clipping sheers;  
And if he chances, for redress,  
The lawyer in to call,  
Why he takes out his legal sheers,  
And fleeces worse than all.  
With his *capias*, *alias*, and *plurias*, declaration, plea,  
replication, rejoinder, surrejoinder, rebutter,  
surrebutter, writ [191] of enquiry, writ of error,  
*habeas corpus*—flaws; fees; three and fourpence, six  
and eightpence, thirteen and fourpence, one pound  
one, &c. &c. &c. &c. &c. *ad infinitum*.  
Thus a fleecing he does go, &c.

But when the hour of sickness comes,  
And fevers mar his sleep,  
This legal fleecer proves, alas!  
Himself a silly sheep;  
Grave doctor's call'd, whose potions, pills,  
The speed of death encrease,  
While his prescription sheers the while  
Strip off the golden fleece;

When a fleecing he, &c.

At length the patient trembling feels  
His latter end is nigh—  
And conscience brings his crimes to view  
And makes him fear to die,  
That holy fleecer, call'd a priest,  
Is then call'd quickly in,  
Who, finding all the wool is gone,  
E'en strips him of his skin.  
Thus a fleecing, &c.

But hold, cries Mrs. Piety,  
And lifts her goggling eyes,  
O wicked lout, these holy men  
Thus for to scandalize!  
To steal the fleece, or strip the skin  
Not wicked robbers they,  
But watchful dogs, whose pious care  
Keeps fox and wolf away.  
Lest a fleecing they should go, &c.

Yet tell me, honest neighbours all,  
When oft with fresh demands,  
For rates, for fees, for Easter dues  
They tax your rack-rent lands,  
While for their tythings often they  
Perpetual warfare keep,  
Do they look more like dogs who guard,  
Or wolves who tear your sheep?  
When a fleecing they, &c.

Nor think that they in country shades,  
Can all the fleecing own,  
Full many a sheepish flat, each day,  
Is fleec'd in London town:  
There tradesmen fleece their customers,  
Them sharpers fleece, and then  
Your thieftakers, for hanging fees,  
The sharpers fleece again.  
When a fleecing, &c.

There misses too, patch'd painted pink'd,  
With fashion's gaudy arts,  
With mincing wiles, and fraudulent guile  
Would fleece us of our hearts.  
Yet while you're roving thus at large,  
You bachelors may find,  
Miss will not only fleece your backs,

But leave her mark behind.  
When a fleecing she, &c.

But these are petty sheerers all,  
And fleece a little flock;  
Behold where haughty ministers  
Fleece the whole nations stock:  
The while pretended patriots,  
A still more venal race,  
With liberty and bawling cant,  
Would fleece them of their place—  
When a fleecing they, &c.

But cease ye fleecing senators  
Your country to undo—  
Or know we British Sans Cullottes  
Hereafter may fleece you,  
For well we know if tamely thus  
We yield our wool like drones  
Ye will not only fleece our backs,  
By God you'll pick our bones—  
When a fleecing ye, &c.

Since then, we every rank and state  
May justly fleecers call,  
And since Corruption's venal pack  
Would fleece us worse than all,  
May we Oppression's out-stretch'd sheers  
With dauntless zeal defy,  
Resolv'd fair Freedom's golden fleece  
To vindicate or die.  
When a fleecing they do go.

*“But cease ye fleecing senators  
Your country to undo—  
Or know we British Sans Cullottes  
Hereafter may fleece you,  
For well we know if tamely thus  
We yield our wool like drones  
Ye will not only fleece our backs,  
By God you'll pick our bones—  
When a fleecing ye, &c.”*

**"Britain's Glory; or, The Blessings of a  
good Constitution" (THE TRIBUNE, No. XV.  
Saturday, 20th June, 1795)**

TO my muse give attention,  
And deem her not long, Sirs,  
For the blessings of the times  
Are the burthen of her song, Sirs,  
While placemen and pensioners,  
As loyal as may be, Sirs,  
Establish inquisitions,  
To convince us we are free, Sirs.  
O! the golden days that ministers must bless!  
Such are the golden days we now possess.

Now the first thing to prove  
We're so free and so happy, Sirs,  
And as equal as all came  
From one common pappy, Sirs,  
There are volumes of Excise-laws,  
As I can inform you, Sirs,  
So num'rous—that, if burn'd,  
All the country they would warm, Sirs.  
O! the golden days, &c.

Then the next of our blessings,  
As you know, my good neighbour,  
Are millions of taxes,  
For which millions must labour:  
Yet hold!—Faith, in these good days  
A better way we learn, yet,  
And continue to pay the tax,  
With no trade to earn it.  
O! the golden days, &c.

Now the Spital-fields weavers  
No longer complain, Sirs,  
That night and day, and day and night,  
They labour might and main, Sirs;  
For faith they've bounteous leisure now  
To idle and to play, Sirs;  
And, as for food and raiment,  
Why—for these they've time to pray, Sirs.  
O! the golden days, &c.

Then the next great blessing of the land,  
To prove us doubly free, Sirs,  
Is a hundred thousand lawyers



All gaping for a fee, Sirs,  
Who with quibbles and with quirks, Sirs,  
In spite of rhyme and reason,  
Will prove that truth's a libel,  
And argument high treason.  
O! the golden days, &c.

But lest these honest guardians  
Of the freedom of the press, Sirs,  
With all their learned eloquence  
The land by halves should bless, Sirs,  
Each coffee-house, each street, each nook,  
With zeal so pure and warm, Sirs,  
Is fill'd (O blessed times indeed)  
With spies and with informers.  
O! the golden days, &c.

There are priests, too, of all degrees,  
So needful to salvation,  
Who eat, 'tis true, a tenth of all  
The earnings of the nation;  
But tho' in idleness they swill,  
If we complain, 'tis odd, Sirs,  
Since their most gracious charity—  
Commends the poor to God, Sirs.  
O! the golden days, &c.

Then another charming thing  
For the welfare of the nation,  
Is the glorious advancement  
In her fame and reputation;  
For York has taken Valenciennes,  
(And somebody else Condé,)  
And done as much in twelve whole months,  
As e'er was done in one day.  
O! the golden days, &c.

And then, although his years, good Sirs,  
And feelings are so tender,  
Did he not march to Dunkirh, bold,  
And bid it to surrender;  
And tho' those villain Sans Culottes  
Would not permit his stay, Sirs,  
He did as well for you and me—  
For faith he ran away, Sirs.  
O! the golden days, &c.

And then there are your Toulon feats,  
And feats at St. Domingo,

And MOIRA's expedition,  
Which we know was just the thing, tho'  
For sailing out, and sailing in,  
He's just as great, I vow, Sirs,  
As, with his fleet of gallant ships,  
Was gallant, great Lord HOWE, Sirs.  
O! the golden days, &c.

And then there's room enough to prove  
Our rulers mighty wise, Sirs,  
For they can things discover  
Ne'er perceiv'd by other eyes, Sirs:  
Nay, deem it wond'rous as you will,  
But facts will prove it true, Sirs,  
They've found it is High Treason  
To cry cock-a-doodle-doo, Sirs.  
O! the golden days, &c.

They've found, as Eaton well can shew,  
Who's now in Newgate lying,  
The tale, my friends, is very strange,  
But very edifying,—  
That cutting off a game cock's head  
Deserves a legal thump, Sirs,  
Since his most gracious Majesty  
Wears feathers at his rump, Sirs.  
O! the golden days, &c.

Since then our glorious government  
So wise and good we prove, Sirs,  
Must not each loyal breast expand  
With wonder and with love, Sirs,  
And cry, God save our noble King,  
Priests, Ministers, and all! Sirs:  
For if they in his sight should stand,  
We none of us can fall, Sirs.  
O! the golden days that ministers must bless!  
Such are the golden days we now possess.

## Further Information

### SOURCE

Ode "On the Destruction of the Bastille" <[http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651\\_head\\_008](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651_head_008)>; "News from Toulon; or, The Men of Gotham's Expedition" <[http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651\\_head\\_051](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651_head_051)>; "A Sheepsheering Song" <[http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651\\_head\\_059](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651_head_059)>; "Britain's Glory; or, The Blessings of a good Constitution" <[http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651\\_head\\_091](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2670#lf1651_head_091)>, in John Thelwall, *The Tribune, A Periodical Publication, consisting chiefly of the Political Lectures of J. Thelwall. Taken in Short-hand by W. Ramsey and revised by the Lecturer* (London: Printed for the Author, 1795).

### FURTHER READING

Other works by John Thelwall (1764-1834) <<http://oll.libertyfund.org/people/john-thelwall>>

*“The distinctive principle of Western social philosophy is individualism. It aims at the creation of a sphere in which the individual is free to think, to choose, and to act without being restrained by the interference of the social apparatus of coercion and oppression, the State.”*  
*[Ludwig von Mises, “Liberty and Property” (1958)]*



### ABOUT THE BEST OF THE OLL

*The Best of the Online Library of Liberty* is a collection of some of the most important material in the Online Library of Liberty. They are chapter length extracts which have been formatted as pamphlets in **PDF**, **ePub**, and **Kindle** formats for easier distribution. These extracts are designed for use in the classroom and discussion groups, or material for a literature table for outreach. The full list can be found here <[oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2465](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2465)>.

A subset of *The Best of the OLL* is *The Best of Bastiat* which is a collection of some of the best material in Liberty Fund's 6 volume edition of *The Collected Works of Frédéric Bastiat* (2011-). The full list can be found here <[oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2477](http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2477)>.

Another useful sampling of the contents of the OLL website is the collection of weekly *Quotations about Liberty and Power* which are organized by themes such as Free Trade, Money and Banking, Natural Rights, and so on. See for example, Richard Cobden's "I have a dream" speech <[oll.libertyfund.org/quotes/326](http://oll.libertyfund.org/quotes/326)>.

### COPYRIGHT AND FAIR USE

The copyright to this material is held by Liberty Fund unless otherwise indicated. It is made available to further the educational goals of Liberty Fund, Inc. and may be used freely for educational and academic purposes. It may not be used in any way for profit.

### ABOUT THE OLL AND LIBERTY FUND

*The Online Library of Liberty* is a project of Liberty Fund, Inc., a private educational foundation established in 1960 to encourage the study of the ideal of a society of free and responsible individuals. The OLL website has a large collection of books and study guides about individual liberty, limited constitutional government, the free market, and peace.

Liberty Fund: <[www.libertyfund.org](http://www.libertyfund.org)>.

OLL: <[oll.libertyfund.org](http://oll.libertyfund.org)>.