

LONDON.

HOUSE OF LORDS—OCTOBER 3.
THE QUEEN.

After the calling over of the House, and some preliminary proceedings, counsel were called in, and Mr. Brougham commenced his speech to the House in a low tone of voice. He spoke, as well as we could collect him, as follows:—

My Lords,
The time has now arrived when it becomes my duty to address your Lordships upon this most momentous of all momentous cases. It is not the august presence of this assembly which oppresses me, for I have often times experienced its indulgence—nor is it the novelty of this proceeding that perplexes me, for the mind gradually gets reconciled to the most extraordinary deviations from the common course of things—neither is it the magnitude of this case that oppresses me, for I am borne up in my task by the conviction of its justice, and by the approval of all mankind—but, my Lords, it is the force of that conviction—it is the knowledge of the sentiments which are universally entertained by all parties, of the innocence of my illustrious client, that now disarms me with the persuasion that my unworthy mode of advocating her cause may for the first time occasion doubts on her case, and induce your Lordships to pass that judgment which the charges that have been preferred are calculated to elicit from you. I feel in the fullest sense, the great importance of the situation in which I am placed—and in defiance of the indulgence which I anticipate at your Lordships' hands, I am still weighed down by the heavy responsibility which I have undertaken. It is no light addition to this feeling to foresee, that before this proceeding shall be brought to a close, it may be my unhappy lot, in the discharge of my duty, and which no loyal and good subject can contemplate without the most painful reflections, to make charges of a nature as serious as it is possible for any individual to stand impeached with.

My Lords, the Princess Caroline of Brunswick arrived in this country in the year 1795. She was the niece of our Sovereign, and the intended Consort of the Heir-Apparent—and not far removed from the heir to the Crown of these Realms. I allude to that period but only for the purpose of passing over all the interval which elapsed from her arrival to her departure in 1814. I rejoice that the most faithful discharge of my duty will allow me, at present, to draw this line—but I cannot do so without pausing, to guard myself against a misrepresentation to which I may, not unnaturally, be exposed, by assuring your Lordships, that if I did not think the evidence against the Queen, not only does not call for recrimination in the present stage of these proceedings, but does not call upon me to utter one syllable by way of attack or recrimination—that, but for that, my lips would not be closed. In the discretionary postponement of the case of which I am possessed, I feel that I give up the right which I have, and abstain from the use of materials which are mine. And let it be remembered, that if hereafter I should find the case I rely upon, fail me, I shall not scruple to avail myself of the means which at present I decline using—and let no man think, under such circumstances, that I, or the youngest member of that profession to which I belong, would hesitate to enter upon the discharge of the painful duty. I have stated, on a former occasion, but to your Lordships it was unnecessary, that an advocate, in the discharge of his duty, knows but one person in the world—his client, and no other. To save that client, by all expedient means, is his duty, and that at all risks, inconveniences, and costs, to other persons, and to himself among them, and he is not to regard the alarm, the tortures, or the destruction which the discharge of his office may bring down upon others, but he must boldly go on, reckless of consequences, even though it should be his unhappy fate to throw his country into confusion for a season.

But, my Lords, at present this painful duty is not imposed on me. I feel that I ought not touch on that case, which under different circumstances would be mine. If before failure in that which I feel confident I shall not fail in, I were to take the course to which I have alluded, I should feel that I gave up the higher ground which I have a right to claim—I should give up the ground of innocence, which it is my duty to take, and seem to confine myself to the extenuation of errors, and the palliation of levities which I stand here to deny. For that which has been said is false, and it is as foul as false on the part of those who say, that their duty to God has dictated to them the part which they have taken on this occasion, and which has proved them ignorant of their first duty towards their fellow creatures—it is foul, and false, and scandalous, I say, and they know it, to assert that improprieties have been admitted on the part of the Queen. I deny the admission of any improprieties on the part of her Majesty—I deny that any have been proved in evidence, and I will disprove the assertion by evidence. One admission I do make on the part of the Queen, and let the Learned Counsel for the Bill make all they can of it, for it is the only one I can acknowledge—I admit that the Queen left this country and went to reside in Italy—in the society of persons chiefly foreigners, and in society inferior to that which she once enjoyed in England. I admit that while she was here and happy, not indeed in her own family, but in the society of your Lordships and your Lordships' families, that the Queen moved in more choice, in more dignified society than she has since known.

It is charged against her that she went to Italy, and instead of associating with Peers and Peeresses of England, took to her society the Italian nobility and commoners in that country. But who are they that bring this charge against her Majesty? Others may blame her choice—others may blame her for going abroad—others may blame her for not having associated with women of her own or at least of her adopted country—others may urge these things against her, but your Lordships can have no right to do it. You cannot fling this at her Majesty—you are the last that ought to do it—you who now presume to sit as judges on her case, for you are the witnesses she has a right to call for the vindication of her conduct. You are the last that can reproach her for leaving England and forsaking British society—for you, her judges, being as well the witnesses that may be called in her behalf, are also the instigators of this, her only admitted crime. While her Majesty resided here, she courteously opened her house to your Lordships. She graciously condescended to admit you to the most exalted society. She condescended to court you to avail yourselves of the honour, and so long

as interests (not her's) attracted some of those she courted, so long as she could be made subservient to the ambitious views of others, she did not court in vain. But when circumstances were changed—when that lust of power and place to which she was doomed to fall a victim, had been satisfied, her doors were opened to your Lordships and your families to no purpose. She could no longer enjoy the society of British Peeresses. She could only lower herself by courting it. She had no alternative but to do this, to court society as a favour, and to see it, if not refused, unwillingly conceded, or leave the country.

Such being the facts, I say, it is not here the Queen will be reproached for leaving England. It is not in the presence of your Lordships that she will be condemned for having established her residence in Italy, which perhaps she would not, which perhaps she ought not to have done, if less unfortunately situated. Afflicted by those considerations which could not fail to press heavily on an ingenious mind, her Majesty went to Italy. During the period of which I have spoken, and up to the time of her departure, she had enjoyed, not indeed the society of her beloved daughter, but the affectionate and grateful respect of her only child. An event, of all others most interesting to a mother's feelings, was about to take place in the marriage of the Princess Charlotte. No announcement of it was made to her Majesty. It was made known to all England—but no intimation on the subject was conveyed to her. To England it was formerly announced—to Europe it was formerly announced—but there was one person to whom it was not announced, and that person was the mother of the intended bride. And why was this? All she had done amounted to this, that having offended one party, her conduct had been arraigned, and she had been proved innocent—and she was no longer favoured and protected by those who had formerly made her their tool. The marriage was solemnized. Still no news of the event was transmitted to her Majesty—she heard of it merely by accident from the courier who was going to announce it to the Pope, that ancient and much respected ally of this Protestant country.

During this period, if but a slight communication took place between the mother and daughter, it was because powerful authority, on the one hand, was opposed to sincere affection, on the other. An event now occurred, which plunged all England in the deepest sorrow, and in which even all foreign nations sympathised—the lamented death of the late beloved Princess. With due regard to the feelings of our allies, the mournful intelligence was communicated to them as speedily as possible by messengers sent for that purpose. That person, who of all the world was most deeply interested in the mournful event—who was most likely to be overwhelmed by the shock, was left to be overwhelmed by the dismal tidings from hearing of them by accident, as she had heard of the marriage of her daughter, by accident. But if she had not heard of her daughter's death by accident, ere long she would have felt that that mournful event had taken place, as the dissolution of the Princess Charlotte was announced to her by the issuing of the Milan commission, and the opening of the present proceedings. Look at the sad fate of this Princess. It has always been her unhappy lot to lose her best protectors by the hand of death—and by a mournful coincidence, hardly one of them has been withdrawn whose death has not been the signal for a new attack on her honour. Mr. Pitt was her earliest and constant friend from the period of her arrival in this country up to the time of his death. He died in 1806, and but a few weeks afterwards the first inquiry into the conduct of her Royal Highness was commenced. He left her Royal Highness as a legacy to Mr. Perceval—her firm, dauntless, and able advocate on that occasion—and no sooner had that melancholy event which laid him low by the hand of an assassin taken place, than that attack was resumed, which his gallantry and skill, and invariable fidelity, had till then prevented. Mr. Whitbread then took up her defence, and when that mournful event occurred, which all good men had united to deplore, without any distinction of party, the grumbling storm was again heard, but it was happily then kept from approaching her Majesty: for her daughter then survived, and all were willing to worship the rising sun.

I now call your Lordships' attention to that which has resulted from the proceeding against her Majesty, and to comment upon the peculiar features of the story which has been got up on the occasion. I have now to remind your Lordships of that which has not been brought to your recollection, but which has rather been obliterated from your memory, by the evidence, the statement of the Attorney General. In the words of my Learned Friend himself, I will bring before you the plan of his opening speech. This will be found of material importance. My Learned Friend did not make that general speech without book or instruction, but it was transcribed for him (and in what way it was transcribed for him, I will leave your Lordships to judge) from the mouths of the witnesses. He believed his Learned Friend (the Attorney General) as every one must who knew his honourable nature, when he said, "I will not state any fact against her Majesty, which I do not believe in my conscience I shall be able to establish by proof; but at the same time, in the discharge of my duty, I shall withhold nothing which can be so established." I know that he spoke most conscientiously. Now that he failed to prove what he stated, I know equally, and there can be but one cause for this failure. My Learned Friend has failed because he told you what had been copied into his brief from the mouths of these witnesses, who had sworn as falsely before as they have done since they were brought to your Lordships' bar. I will now call your Lordships' attention to one or two samples of the evidence given, which will enable your Lordships to judge pretty accurately of the value of the whole of the testimony of the witnesses, comparing what has been stated in evidence, with the facts set forth in the speech of the Attorney General. For this purpose I shall select but one or two of the leading witnesses.

In the first place, it was stated by my Learned Friend, that the improprieties imputed to the Queen, extended down to almost the present time. Now, it so happened, that the facts sworn to by the witnesses extended but to within three years of the present time, that is over just half of the period which they were said to have filled up. I pray you to look, my Lords, in the first place at the way in which the Attorney General opened his case, and in the manner in which he attempted to prove it. I will shew you, said my Learned Friend, the Attorney General, the clear and decisive marks of two persons having slept in her Majesty's bed in Naples

—I will shew you, that this occurred when she came home early and unexpectedly from the Opera, on the second night after her arrival at Naples—I will shew you, that she went to Bergami's bedroom, where he then was, and that she was not visible to the nobility, who flocked to see her, until a late hour on the following day. These were the expressions used by my Learned Friend in his opening speech. They contained assertions rising one above another in regular succession, and each succeeding the other in momentous aggravation.

But when my Learned Friend came to his proofs, every one of his assertions not only fails him, but is negatived, we may say by the very witnesses called to substantiate the statement. Dumont is asked, "Did she know where the Princess went on that night?" No, she unequivocally says, she knew not the fact. "Did she know where the Queen went when she came home that night?" No, she knew not where. "Did she know where Bergami was that night?" No, she knew not where he went to bed, or where he slept. "Did she know when the Princess got up the following morning?" No, she did not recollect the fact—Did she recollect the crowd of visitors to pay their respects that morning? No, she recollects not that. So that instead of giving an affirmative to the Attorney General, she gave him an actual negative in the particular questions, which she unequivocally answered: for she said that to her recollection, she rather thought that the Princess was up at her usual early hour on the morning, when it was his object to shew she had remained until a late hour in her bed room. And she did not say one word about the visitors of rank who thronged to pay their respects, on the morning after the Princess's arrival at Naples was known to the Nobility.

He should next advert to what was said to have taken place at Milan, a part of the case which had been most particularly opened. The Attorney General, it would here be seen, had gathered all his information, indeed, he had acquired all his knowledge of Italy, and its manners and customs, from his brief; and his friend the Solicitor General, too, seemed to have no pretension in the world to any better information on that head than he had gathered from the same source. On this point he need only remind your Lordships of what they had stated in elucidation of their ideas of the Casino at Milan, and of the masquerade. In remarking upon the circumstance of the Princess having been refused admittance to the Casino, they particularly dwelt upon the high character and select nature of the company there admitted, and seem to feel a particular degree of horror and astonishment, at the black-billing of the Princess; seeming to forget that most cogent reason for such a proceeding was to be found in the fact of the Casino being held in the immediate neighbourhood, nay, on the very scene of the operations of the Commission at Milan. And then of the masquerade, with what exquisite simplicity did they not expatiate upon that part of the conduct of the Princess? "Who," said his learned friend, "ever heard of a Princess—the Princess of Wales—the wife of the Heir-Apparent to the Throne of Great Britain, going to a masquerade, seeking to shun observation, barying herself in secrecy, and screening herself in a disguise? Instead of appearing in all the pomp and splendour which became her rank—instead of her state carriage and her numerous retinue—instead of proceeding in an open and public manner—she went in a private hired carriage, stealing out by a back door, accompanied only by a single attendant," and he wondered his learned friend did not add, what he has however afterwards hinted, "disguised in a domino."

He was not at all a loss for the source of their information on which this statement was founded. He knew well enough that it had all been derived from the previous depositions of the witness Demont and the witness Majocchi, who had repeated the same story over and over again so often, that at length, confounding all distinction they neither remembered what was true nor what was false. In this part of the statement, his learned friend thus expressed himself, "I am instructed to say," in other places it had been, "the witness says," here, however, it was, "I am instructed to say that the dress of the Princess was so highly indecent, that she was hissed and booed out of the theatre," thus directly ascribing what he calls the hissing and hooting out of the theatre to the gross immorality and indecency of the dress worn by the Princess. Their lordships would recollect that on this point the witness had said the dress was exceedingly ugly, and the mask was ugly, and that was all they had heard from the witness concerning the dress. And several ugly masks came round her and made a hideous noise, and she, being unknown, as was usually the case at masquerades, passed some jokes upon them, and they retired, after which other ugly masks came round her in a similar way, and the Princess retired when she was fatigued. This was the amount of the hooting out of the theatre. He would not fatigue their lordships by going on with any further remarks on this part of the case.

He would proceed to notice his learned friend's opening the case at Messina, where, as he usually did in his speech, he gave the day of the month. He had stated, that there was only one passage to the bedroom; but it appeared from evidence that there were two. That was all he could cite from Demont. Majocchi was represented to have seen the Princess go into Bergami's room, where she remained for a great length of time, and to have heard the noise of kisses. Upon the examination of that witness, the extraordinary length of time proved to be about ten minutes, and the noise he heard seems out to be a whispering. Then came Sacchi—he too, no doubt, had often told his story before; and he (Mr. Brougham) firmly believed that he had deposed to those particulars which had been so minutely detailed, and so much dwelt on by his learned friend in the opening, of the arrival of a courier by night, and of his seeking Bergami in his own apartment, for the purpose of delivering the message he had brought, of his not finding him there, but of seeing him presently in a state of alarm come from the Princess's chamber, and of his telling him, on seeing his confusion, that he had heard his child crying, and come to see what was the matter. Yet had all this been denied by the witness; not indeed directly and in plain terms, but in as full a manner as any statement of so minute and particular a nature could be denied, by his declaring that he did not know of any such circumstance.

Afterwards came the narrative of this disgraceful scene at the Barona, so disgraceful and disgusting, as stated by the Attorney-General, that it gave the house more the character of a brothel than that of a palace. It was this licentious conduct which even shocked her servants, and drove from her circle all society of rank. And yet, singular as it was, after

this conduct became publicly known through the servants, that Lady Charlotte Lindsay reviewed her visits to the Princess. The servants of Lady C. must doubtless have commured with those of the Princess; there was no step taken to keep this grave like secret, and yet, from first to last, we hear nothing of its blasting operation upon the minds of visitors of unquestionable honour, for such were Lady Charlotte Lindsay, Lord and Lady Glenberrie, Lady C. Campbell, and the other honourable personages in her Royal Highness's suite. These joined her Royal Highness after the scenes at the Barona; some met the Princess at Naples, some joined her at Rome, others at Leghorn. As, at even much later periods, her Majesty was attended by illustrious company. She was received by such after the long voyage; she was received by the legitimate Sovereign of Bari, and the still more legitimate Son of Palermo. She was equally treated by the legitimate Stuarts of Savoy, whose legitimacy stands contra-distinguished from the illegitimacy of the family whose possession of the throne of these realms stands upon the basis of public liberty and public rights. She was received even by a Prince who ranks higher in point of nobility—the Bey of Tunis—(a laugh)—by whom she was received in the most distinguished and flattering manner—so that, so far from being disgraced and shunned, as she had been represented by the Nobility, and people of high rank in countries where she went, she was distinguished by the most particular reception by the highest rank of all.

He then proceeded to comment more particularly on other parts of the statement of the Attorney-General, and the sort of evidence by which it was supported—remarked, in the strongest view of irony and sarcastic satire, on the glaring and absurd character of a case, in which the parties were represented to be so totally unguarded as to commit those acts which, in all ordinary cases, would have been done in the greatest privacy, in the presence of so many witnesses, and where the number of the witnesses, and the positive strength of the evidence, seemed to have been uniformly wrought up to the higher proportion to the criminality of the particular act of the parties deposed to. Their Lordships might easily suppose that persons so wary against themselves—persons so cautious and diligent for their accusers—would not be wanting to do the finishing kindness for their foes, and grant one another the last favour in the presence of others. According to the parties are seen sleeping together. This is said to have taken place habitually, nightly, by land as well as by sea, and on the latter element in the presence of all the passengers. Nay to such a degree was this done, that Bergami could not retire with the Queen for an hour to an anti-chamber, where she was to change her dress, and her habiliments, from head to foot, without care being taken to post the hired, trusty, intriguing Swiss chambermaid at the door—without telling her, "there you are to wait three quarters of an hour while we are going for such a purpose inside."—(A laugh.)

But their Lordships would all along perceive that in proportion as these disgusting scenes were of a nature to amuse and offend every body of virtuous disposition—to inspire with disgust, almost with horror, every well regulated mind compelled to be acquainted with them; in the same proportion especial care had been taken that they should not be acted in privacy, and under the veil of decorum and reserve. The things alleged were not done in those secret places of iniquity appropriated to unlawful and infamous intercourse—not in any of those hidden haunts which vice had consecrated to her purposes—not in any luxurious retreat, whose selection and delicious pleasures might pamper every sense, and perpetually administer to voluptuousness and sensuality—not in any of those Cyprian islands of old, devoted to the pleasures of Roman monarchs; no—but before witnesses; in open daylight, when the sun was at its meridian; but that was not enough, care was not to be taken that they were to be seen by a courier of their own, a man only three or four days in their service, without even any furniture of their carriage, or their own dress, arranged so as to veil their disgraceful situations. He asked their Lordships had vice ever before been known to be so unwise, so imprudent? whether unthinking folly, even at that period of life when the passions swell high, had pursued its bad career so openly, recklessly, and carelessly as in them? He hoped that this most material consideration would sink into their Lordships' minds, and have its due weight, and when they came to decide, operate as a reasonable check. But all this was nothing—their kindness towards their perversaries—their faithfulness to the plot against themselves, if it had stopped here, might have been all gratuitous—all their obsequious compliance with the wishes of their enemies might have gone for nothing, because the taking advantage of it might depend upon the good fortune of the opposite party. The proof of their kindly disposition were to be carried further, therefore every one of the servants who had been produced against them was to be dismissed without any cause at all, or the slightest in the world—and not only that, but they were to be refused to be taken back on their humble and earnest application, when there was every human inducement to make them do so. This was not all yet—Her Majesty was aware of all that he had done for her enemies, of all the elaborate devices he had described for her own undoing, of her various schemes to render concealment and impunity impossible, by turning away her servants causelessly, rejecting their petitions to be restored to her service, and thus sending them into the ranks of her enemies. She knew the machines that had been made by those enemies, and she gave them the most useful allies. Yet knowing all this, she took the resolution to return to her own kingdom. She was told she was undone if she did so. She was desired, besought, implored to pause, and weigh maturely the consequences, before she ventured on so enormous a risk. Well, notwithstanding all, the Queen came to England, and here on this spot confronted herself to the very witnesses whom, by her conduct, she had enabled to undo her; and intreated with degradation and divorce, knowing too that this was not an empty threat, she up to this hour refused all endeavours towards a compromise of her honour and rights—a magnificent allowance—the opportunity of an unrestrained indulgence in any part of the world in her criminal desires, and even a safeguard and protection from the Court of England, where she might think proper to fix her residence abroad.

If these were the characteristics of criminality, or the liniments by which vice was to be traced, if they were the symptoms of that worst of all mental diseases, with which her Majesty stood charged, then he had badly read human nature—and the conclusions which he had drawn from all that he had seen, or heard, or read, turned out to be most false.