







THE DIVORCE CASE  
OF QUEEN CAROLINE





*W T Mansell, Photo*

**CAROLINE OF BRUNSWICK, QUEEN OF GEORGE IV**

*By Lawrence South Kensington Museum*

# THE DIVORCE CASE OF QUEEN CAROLINE

AN ACCOUNT OF THE REIGN OF GEORGE IV AND  
THE KING'S RELATIONS WITH OTHER WOMEN

BY

WM. DODGSON BOWMAN

AUTHOR OF

"YACHTING AND YACHTSMEN," "BRISTOL AND AMERICA"  
AND OTHER WORKS

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TO  
O. C.  
IN RECOGNITION OF  
INNUMERABLE KINDNESSES  
AND  
DEVOTED SYMPATHY



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# THE DIVORCE CASE OF QUEEN CAROLINE

## CHAPTER I

### GEORGE, PRINCE OF WALES

**G**EORGE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK, eldest son of George III, was born on August 12th, 1762. He inherited many titles, and from birth was Electoral Prince of Brunswick-Luxemburg, Duke of Cornwall and Rothesay, Earl of Carrick, Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles, and Great Stewart of Scotland. Before he was old enough to understand the value and significance of these honours, he was also created by patent, Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester.

Like his younger brothers and sisters, the young Prince of Wales had a host of preceptors and tutors. One of them, Mr. Dodd, some years later preached an affecting and eloquent sermon in the Fleet Prison the night before he was hanged for forgery. Another became Archbishop of York. Others attained important offices of State. But with all his teachers, George, ably seconded by his younger brother, the Duke of York, maintained intermittent warfare. Within fourteen months of his birth, the younger brother had been appointed by the King, Bishop of

## 2      GEORGE, PRINCE OF WALES

Osnaburg. Lord Holderness, the first Governor of the Royal children, resigned his thankless office because of the Prince's imperious temper.

But there was ample excuse for the fretfulness of the Royal children. They were kept under the severest discipline, and unmercifully flogged for the slightest fault. The education of the Prince and his brothers was carried on with German thoroughness. Eight hours a day were given to classics and languages, while there were masters for a host of other subjects. The Palace gates shut them off from intercourse with the outside world, and especially from the society of young people. The best elements of school life—companionship, the spirit of emulation and healthy rivalry in studies and games—were absent from this grim academy at Kew.

This drill-sergeant method of training brought its inevitable reactions. When the Prince of Wales became legally of age at eighteen, he began to chafe at his bonds. But the King's restraining hand held him severely in check. He was not allowed to appear at a public ball until the Spanish ambassador asked it as a favour; and when the young man asked permission to accompany the King when he made a tour of inspection of the forts and dockyards, the request was refused. Instead of this the Prince and the Duke of York were taken to Kew Gardens and given instructions in fortification and gunnery. Then the Prince asked for a commission in the Army, but the King turned a deaf ear to the proposal.

Hedged in on every side, and virtually a prisoner in the Palace, the Prince took the course of any lad of spirit and contrived means of eluding his jailors. In the King's absence he paid many private visits to

town where he made a host of acquaintances, who were not on the visiting list, of what Horace Walpole called "the Palace of Piety."

Unfortunately too for the Prince, it was at this period that the King quarrelled with his brother the Duke of Cumberland, who had married Lady Anne Luttrell, instead of a German woman. No more heinous offence could have been committed, and the quarrel was long and bitter. To annoy the King, the Duke established friendly relations with his nephews and encouraged them to visit Cumberland House. Here they imbibed Whig principles and were initiated into the mysteries of games of chance. Among the more notable men of the period that he met there were those pillars of the Whig cause, Fox and Sheridan, with both of whom he formed enduring friendships. At that time Fox was in his thirty-fourth year, yet he had wrecked his constitution by fast living. Though a ruined gambler, he was one of the most influential men of his age, and the idol of his friends. Every morning he held a levee at his lodging in St. James's Street which was attended by a crowd of followers and admirers. To this circle the young Prince attached himself. Walpole thus describes the scene.

"His bristly black person and shagged breast, quite open and rarely purified by any ablutions, was wrapped in a foul linen night-gown, and his bushy hair dishevelled. In these eerie weeds, and with epicurean good-humour did he dictate his politics, and in this school did the heir of the crown attend his lessons, and imbibe them."

The friendship of this ill-assorted pair lasted for long years, in spite of many changes of fortune, and

even when the fates ultimately separated them the Prince never lost his admiration for Fox. Years after the death of the statesman the Regent received his Tory ministers in a chamber, the most conspicuous adornment of which was a statue of the political preceptor of his younger days.

The King detested Fox; and the Prince's demonstration of friendship for the statesman was regarded by His Majesty as a personal insult to himself. There had been many bitter quarrels between father and son, but this development meant an open rupture.

In his resentment the King implored the Chancellor, Thurlow, to tell him what he should do. Thurlow replied that the King "would never have peace until he put both in the Tower."

But the Prince showed his resentment at his father's tyranny in a more public manner. When the India Bill, brought in by Fox's short and ill-fated ministry, was being debated in the House of Commons, he was an interested listener during the discussions and showed his partizanship so strongly that one speaker protested that "if the great personage should on any occasion testify by his behaviour a partiality for any set of men, such marks of his preference would be unbecoming, and might operate as a means of influence." Lord North and Mr. Fox replied to these censures, and the latter characterized the charges as "pernicious and ridiculous alike, adopted by men no less the enemies of free discussion in that House than the calumniators of the motives of a distinguished personage, whose whole spirit was honour."

A few days later the King dismissed the ministry. Then followed a general election in which took place that memorable contest in Westminster of which

Fox was the hero and Georgina, Duchess of Devonshire, the heroine. Rarely has a candidate for Parliamentary honours received such spectacular support. The Prince threw himself into the battle with ardour. Carlton House, which he now occupied, became Fox's committee-rooms, and many of the fashionable men about town rallied to the Prince's standard. The Duchess's promise of a kiss for a vote proved an irresistible bribe, and Fox was triumphantly elected.

The victory was celebrated with delirious enthusiasm. Fox was chaired through the West End streets and squares and then made a speech to the crowd that assembled before Carlton House. The next day a fête was held in the garden of the Prince's house, to which all the Whig leaders and their wives were invited.

The King on his way to open Parliament was a witness of these rejoicings, and the furrows in his brow deepened as he noted the demeanour of the mob that surrounded his eldest son.

The Prince's extravagance also accentuated his father's displeasure. With the memory of former years of restraint, the heir to the throne plunged recklessly into a dizzy round of dissipation. Balls, masquerades, drinking bouts, and race-meetings at which he betted heavily followed each other in rapid succession. On dress alone he spent, at this period, not less than ten thousand pounds a year. At many of the parties given under his direction, women of the town who enjoyed his favour mingled with wives and daughters of the nobility ; but so low was the general tone of morality then in London society, that no one seemed to regard this as in any sense scandalous.

## 6      GEORGE, PRINCE OF WALES

London was then the gayest capital in Europe. The three-bottle man was regarded as of normal appetite ; the abstainer as a freak. Gambling was universal. Many were more desperate gamblers than the Prince, and others earned notoriety by insensate pranks. The men of fashion of that time were the spiritual fathers of our own bright young people. But where the Prince excelled all others was in extravagance. From the day he was established at Carlton House, he gave free play to that mania for reconstruction and building which obsessed him for the rest of his life. Money was poured out like water in the gratification of this passion. When he was installed in this old residence of the Princess Dowager, it was found to be out of repair. This gave the Prince his first opportunity for the display of that taste in form and line on which he prided himself. Undeterred by the enormous cost of this restoration, he plunged into further extravagances. To celebrate the completion of the work a magnificent ball was given at Carlton House. This was followed by a public breakfast at the same place, which was attended by six hundred guests.

Society welcomed the Prince with open arms, and the new life after long years of seclusion intoxicated him. Devonshire House was then a common meeting-ground for the wits and high-brows of the day, as well as the principal members of the Whig party ; and there the Prince who was a constant visitor was the centre of attraction. Here he met Whitbread, Grey and Sheridan, who became his close admirers and supporters. But all his friends were not so distinguished and reputable, and round the town many stories were whispered about his wild adventures.

Among his companions were the three Barrymores, the Duke of Queensberry (afterwards known as "Old Q"), Sir John Lade and the Hon. George Hanger.

The eldest of the Barrys, Lord Barrymore, had a short and hectic career, and some incidents in his life were so lurid that he was known to his friends as "Hellgate." His brother Henry, who was lame, was nicknamed "Cripple-gate." The third brother, the Hon. and Rev. Augustus Barry, who bore an even more unsavoury reputation than the others, was known as "Newgate." Why he was given this title it is difficult to understand, for he had been an occupant of every gaol in the kingdom, except Newgate. There was also a sister who was dubbed "Billingsgate" by the Prince, because of her coarse language. The oldest of the brothers, Lord Barrymore, was very popular and a friend and constant associate of the Prince of Wales.

Sir John Lade, another of his companions, taught the Prince to drive. His wife had enjoyed the patronage of Rann—better known as Sixteen-String Jack, the highwayman. When this gentleman was hanged at Tyburn, she secured, we are told, "the notice of persons of high degree." Her skill in driving excelled even that of her husband, and earned the warmest commendations of the Prince.

Then there was the Hon. George Hanger, who was the Prince's boon companion for sixteen years. This gentleman evidently knew the value of publicity as well as any modern actress or playwright, and brought himself effectively into public notice by his geese and turkey wager at Carlton House. The affair is thus described by a contemporary writer :



“During one of the convivial parties at Carlton House he designedly introduced the subject of the travelling powers of the turkey and the goose and declared that the turkey would outstrip the goose. The Prince, who placed great reliance on his judgment, backed his opinion. A match was made with Mr. Berkeley of twenty turkeys against twenty geese, for a distance of ten miles ; the race to be for five hundred pounds. And as Mr. Hanger and the turkey party hesitated not to lay two to one in favour of their bird, the Prince did the same to a considerable amount, not in the least suspecting that the whole was a deep-laid plan to extract a sum of money from his pockets. The Prince deputed Mr. Hanger to select twenty of the most wholesome and high-feathered birds which could be procured ; and on the day appointed, he and his party of turkeys, and Mr. Berkeley and his party of geese, set off to decide the match. For the first three hours, everything seemed to indicate that the turkeys would be the winners, as they were then two miles in advance of the geese ; but, as night came on, the turkeys began to stretch out their necks towards the branches of the trees, which lined the sides of the road. In vain the Prince attempted to urge them on with his pole, to which a bit of red cloth was attached ; in vain Mr. Hanger dislodged one from its roosting-place, only to see three or four others comfortably perching among the branches ; in vain was the barley strewn upon the road. In the meantime, the geese came waddling on, and in a short time passed the turkeys, whose party were all busy among the trees attempting to dislodge the birds ; but further progress was found impossible, and the geese were declared the winners.”

Between politics, in which he used the Whig Party as a weapon with which to attack the King, and a dizzy round of pleasure, the Prince spent the first three years of his majority. Then came a slackening of the pace, which the King's minister Pitt had confidently expected, and patiently awaited.

When he was twenty-one, the Prince had been voted by Parliament, after much wrangling between the King and Fox's ministry, fifty thousand pounds a year, thirty thousand pounds for debts, and an equal amount for outfit; the fifty thousand pounds per annum being paid from the King's Civil List. In addition he received the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall, amounting to twelve or thirteen thousand pounds a year.

Now after a lapse of little more than three years it was found that the Prince's affairs were hopelessly involved, and that he was fathoms deep in debt. Years before the Prince had been mixed up in an intrigue—to which reference will be made later—and from this the King had released him after the payment of a large sum of money. But now His Majesty believed that his son's embarrassments were in part due to the financial support he had given the opposition in Parliament. He saw in the Prince's difficulties the opportunity of crushing the Whigs, and getting the reins of government entirely in his own hands. Pitt and the Chancellor were empowered to settle the business, but the Prince and his friends quickly perceived that the minister would not come to his assistance except on the terms of political surrender. The Prince wrote repeatedly to the King, who in his turn asked for a detailed account of the debts. This the Prince would

not furnish as completely as the King desired. He admitted that he owed £160,000 and asked for £250,000 to set him on his feet again. As neither side would move, negotiations came to a deadlock. The Opposition raised the subject of the Prince's debts in the House of Commons, but Pitt coldly replied to Fox's demands "that he was not instructed to make any communications to the House respecting the Royal Family." Then the Prince threatened to break up his establishment and set aside forty thousand pounds a year to the payment of his debts. To this the King, fearing fresh scandal, replied that if the Prince chose to take a rash step he must take the consequences.

To show that he was in earnest the Prince at once announced the sale of his stud, closed many of the rooms in Carlton House, and dismissed most of his household.

The horses and carriages only realized seven thousand pounds, but for the first time since he had been launched on a public career, he achieved popularity. His pose as a martyr proved successful, and even his foes expressed sympathy.

The Whigs were not slow to make political capital out of the Prince's difficulties.

"Here," they said, "was a King five of whose sons had been banished from the country, and were living abroad in poverty and disgrace, while the oldest remained at home in a dismantled palace, his establishment dismissed, and himself reduced in externals to the conditions of a private gentleman."

They also reminded the public that the King, who was so shocked by his son's extravagance, had himself many times come cap in hand to Parliament loaded

with heavy debts, and asked for help in liquidating them.

The Prince at this time was in sore financial straits. He lived in the houses of his friends, used their carriages, and raised money by every device known to the impecunious. He even borrowed money from that notorious French Prince, the Duke of Orleans. Fox, hearing of this transaction, recovered the bond, and went to remonstrate with the Prince. The Prince denied all knowledge of the business, and persisted in his denials until Fox produced one of the bonds from his pocket, and the Prince was abashed into silence.

The Prince's campaign of economy—the first of several—soon began to bear fruit. His debts under a fixed amount were cleared off, and nine per cent on the larger ones were paid.

At last public opinion turned so strongly in the Prince's favour that the King and Pitt were compelled to bow to the storm. Men of all parties felt that the Prodigal had fed on husks long enough, and that it was time veal appeared on the menu. After prolonged negotiations, the King yielded and agreed from his own Civil List to add ten thousand pounds a year to the Prince's income. At the same time the House of Commons voted one hundred and sixty-one thousand pounds to pay off the debts, and sixty thousand pounds for the alterations to Carlton House.

The Prince's satisfaction at this relief from the burden of debt, coupled with a substantial addition to his income, did not last long. The humiliation he had suffered was quickly forgotten. Visitors flocked once more to Carlton House to a brilliant series of masquerades and parties. The lure of the gaming-table

and the race-course was irresistible, and the words "economy" and "retrenchment" were expunged from his dictionary. In three more years his debts rose to the colossal total of six hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

## CHAPTER II

MRS. FITZHERBERT

IN considering the prospects of Caroline as bride to the Prince of Wales, it is necessary to pass in review both his financial and love-affairs, which are inextricably mingled as the reader will presently see. Before he came of age the Prince became intimate with the notorious and beautiful Mrs. Robinson, whose features as Perdita have been immortalized by Sir Joshua Reynolds. Mrs. Robinson was one of the fashionable courtesans of the period and attracted many lovers, of whom at a later day Fox was the most notable. The intercourse between Perdita and the Prince was brief but ardent. The lady was exceedingly exultant in winning such a captive and in her memoirs gave the history of the affair with candour unabashed. Before the Prince's ardour cooled she induced him to sign a bond in her favour for twenty thousand pounds. Then when the intrigue was over and the Prince was congratulating himself on his freedom, Mrs. Robinson gently but firmly began to blackmail him. He had written her many compromising letters which she threatened to publish unless he bought them from her.

The King bought the letters through an emissary for five thousand pounds, and as he related the incident declared with pharisaical fervour that he was happy to say he had never been personally engaged in such a transaction. The bond of which the King knew

nothing was recovered by Fox in exchange for an annuity of four hundred pounds.

Evidently this first love made a strong impression on the Prince's mind, for many years later when this poor moth had burnt her wings in the flame and was reduced to misery and want, she appealed to the Prince who replied with delicacy and generosity: "I will certainly wait upon you, but it will be late before I can come to the Ship. Should it be within the compass of my means to rescue you from the abyss you apprehend that is before you, I need not say that the temptation of gratifying others, and at the same time and by the same means making one's self happy, is too alluring to be neglected a single moment. In the meantime only rest assured of my good wishes and good intentions."

Not often is a long-discarded mistress treated with such kindly consideration.

As early as 1783 when he was but twenty-one the Prince began to turn his thoughts towards matrimony. At a dinner-party given by Lord Lewisham, it is recorded that he drank very hard and then gave way to depression, and bewailed the solitary and stony road that men of Royal blood are fated to tread. "Here were the Dukes of Rutland and Devonshire," he said, "who could marry talented women that they liked. For my part I suppose I should be forced to marry some ugly German."

Then he suddenly turned to Rigby, the learned and witty Master of the Rolls, and asked him point-blank:

"What would you advise me to do?"

"Faith, sir," was the suave and cautious reply, "I am not yet drunk enough to give advice to a Prince of Wales about marrying."

A year later when the Prince was floundering in a morass of debt a new interest came into his life, and caused him for a while to forget his embarrassments. For the first and possibly the only time in his life he fell seriously in love. At Richmond he met Mrs. Fitzherbert, the beautiful and charming daughter of a Hampshire gentleman, and at once began to pay her attentions that placed her in an embarrassing and awkward position.

She had been twice married, first in 1775 to Mr. Edward Weld of Lulworth Castle, Dorsetshire, who died in the year of their marriage. Then she became the wife of Mr. Fitzherbert of Swinnerton in Staffordshire who died in 1781, leaving her for the second time widowed at the age of twenty-five, with a fortune of two thousand pounds a year.

When the Prince first met her she was twenty-eight, and in the prime of her beauty. In contemporary records she is described as gifted in many ways, "and a lady of the first fashion."

The Prince declared his passion in the theatrical and extravagant style of the heroes of Richardson's and Smollett's novels. He wrote the lady letters of inordinate length, assured her he would die if she did not put him out of his misery, shed copious tears, and on one occasion sent a deputation of his friends to her who informed her that the Prince had stabbed himself, and only her immediate presence at Carlton House would save him. Mrs. Fitzherbert, regarding marriage as an impossibility, rejected his suit.

The Prince renewed his attentions with redoubled ardour. He made extravagant promises, and even got Mrs. Fitzherbert to Carlton House where a mock marriage was performed. But the next day she sent



a letter to Lord Southampton in which she declared she would not be bound by what had occurred, as she was not a free agent. She then sailed for Holland where she remained for more than a year. She was not, however, left in peace. Letter after letter from the Prince, in which he expressed the volcanic ardour of his affections, followed each other in rapid succession.

There can be no doubt that the Prince's love was sincere. His infatuation manifested itself in the strangest ways. Mrs. Fox told Lord Holland that the Prince came down more than once to talk to her and Mr. Fox on the subject. "He cried by the hour," she said. "He testified the sincerity and violence of his passion and despair by extravagant expression and actions—rolling on the floor, striking his forehead, tearing his hair, falling into hysterics and swearing that he would abandon the country and forgo the crown."

There were two legal obstacles to marriage that seemed insurmountable. These were the Royal Marriage Act, and the Act of Succession. Under the former, such a marriage was clearly illegal without the King's consent. None knew better than the Prince that the King would never permit such a union.

But even if he had been a consenting party the fact that Mrs. Fitzherbert was a Roman Catholic would have thrown a prince contracting marriage with her out of succession to the Crown.

In his infatuation the Prince made light of these obstacles. In a letter to Mrs. Fitzherbert, which she afterwards showed to Lord Stourton, the Prince assured her that "the King would connive at the union," and he solemnly pledged himself that their

marriage would be in such form as would satisfy her scruples.

Mrs. Fitzherbert was satisfied with this pledge, and she returned to England. The Prince kept his intentions a secret from all but his closest intimates. But with the arrival of Mrs. Fitzherbert the busy tongue of rumour was unloosed. Some of this gossip must have reached Fox's ears, for a week before the marriage ceremony took place the Prince received a letter from his friend that would have made a more prudent man pause before committing himself. After pointing out the obstacles to a marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert, already set out, Fox implored the Prince to consider the difficulties that would subsequently arise.

"I have stated this danger," he said, "upon the supposition that the marriage could be a real one, but Your Royal Highness knows as well as I that according to the present laws of the country it cannot, and I need not point out to your good sense what a source of inconvenience it must be to you, to her, and above all to the nation, to have it a matter of dispute and discussion whether the Prince of Wales is or is not married. If anything could add to the weight of these considerations, it is the impossibility of remedying the mischief I have alluded to. For if Your Royal Highness should think proper, when you are twenty-five years old, to notify to Parliament your intention to marry, in what manner can it be notified? In the meantime a mock marriage—for it can be no other—is neither honourable for any of the parties, nor, with respect to your Royal Highness, even safe. This appears so clear to me that, if I were Mrs. Fitzherbert's father or brother, I would advise

her not by any means to agree to it, and to prefer any other species of connection with you to one leading to so much misery and mischief."

Fox's grave warning was without effect. The Prince of Wales was now too far committed to draw back. Fox's letter must have been disagreeable reading for him, but there is no sign of this in his insincere and evasive reply: "Your letter of last night," he wrote, "afforded me more true satisfaction than I can find words to express, as it is an additional proof to me, which I assure you I did not want, of your having that true regard and affection for me, which is not only the wish but the ambition of my life to merit. Make yourself easy, my dear friend: believe me the world will now soon be convinced that there not only is, but never was, any grounds for these reports, which of late have been so malevolently circulated."

The Prince was writing with his tongue in his cheek, for a week later, on December 21st, the much-debated marriage was celebrated.

This was not affected without some trouble. A disreputable military chaplain, Rosenhagen by name, was invited to perform the ceremony but declined on the ground that "he dare not betray the duty he owed to the Prince by assisting in an affair that might bring such serious consequences to him." The real reason, according to a diarist of the period, was that "no *specific* offer was made to Rosenhagen."

Another clergyman was approached, and agreed to perform the marriage, but afterwards drew back in alarm when he learned the true state of affairs.

Finally an accommodating clergyman was found in the person of the Rev. Mr. Burt of Twickenham, who on his death-bed declared to his family that he had

married the Prince of Wales to Mrs. Fitzherbert and received five hundred pounds for his good offices.

The wedding took place at Mrs. Fitzherbert's house in Park Street, in the presence of her uncle and brother, as well as independent witnesses—General Keppel and Mr. Orlando Bridgman. A certificate of the marriage, containing the signatures of the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert, is still extant, but those of the witnesses are missing. At a time of peril, when there was risk that the whole circumstances of the marriage would be disclosed, the witnesses begged Mrs. Fitzherbert to remove their names from the certificate. This act of self-sacrifice, which she afterwards regretted, she performed with a pair of scissors, and so destroyed a valuable proof of her status as wife of the Prince.

But the two principals of this singular affair faced the dangers and difficulties of their position with light-hearted courage. The difficulties were at once apparent. Danger loomed in the distance. Mrs. Fitzherbert was proud of her husband—the handsomest and best-dressed Prince in Europe—and she gave him devotion and fidelity. The Prince on his part chivalrously exercised every particle of influence he possessed to shield her from the embarrassments encountered as an unacknowledged wife. The Prince had risked his crown to marry the woman he loved ; she her reputation. But for a time the pair forgot this and were happy. Long afterwards recalling these days Mrs. Fitzherbert confessed that “they were very happy and very poor, and went through many difficulties together very cheerfully.”

But the “misery and mischief” which Fox had predicted soon overtook the lovers. Malicious

caricatures which held them up to ridicule were exhibited in West End shops. Scurrilous libels were printed in the public journals. Society ladies, who had formerly been on terms of intimacy with Mrs. Fitzherbert, either refused to meet her, or greeted her with gestures eloquent of scorn. Queen Charlotte, that curious compound of piety and malice, was inexpressibly shocked by seeing the Prince and his wife in the Prince's box at the trial of Warren Hastings. Though she was not so squeamish in later years when she sent Lady Jersey, the Prince's mistress, as her representative to meet Princess Caroline, her son's bride, when she came to England.

For a time Mrs. Fitzherbert was the most-talked-of woman in the kingdom. The fact that she was a Roman Catholic caused the ultra-Protestants to regard the Prince with grave suspicion.

But worse was to follow. The Prince's financial affairs had come to a crisis, and his friends were contemplating raising the subject in the House of Commons. At a meeting held for the purpose of discussing this step, Fox had some private conversations with the Prince, in the course of which the statesman asked his friend if there was any truth in the rumour that he was married to Mrs. Fitzherbert. The Prince distinctly and emphatically denied either that he was married or contemplated marriage with the lady.

Fox knew that this matter would be raised in the House by some member of the King's party when the debts were under discussion, and he was therefore satisfied by the Prince's assurance, and felt that he could face the storm with equanimity.

In April 1787—about eighteen months after the

marriage—Pitt, the Prime Minister, in answer to a question by a private member that “involved matters of Church and State,” referred to the delicacy of the question and said that “the private knowledge he possessed on the subject made him particularly desirous of avoiding it; but if it were absolutely determined to bring it forward, he would, however distressing it might prove to him, discharge his duty to the public, and enter fully into the subject.”

A few days later Sheridan took up this challenge, protested against the insinuations and menaces that had been thrown out and declared that the Prince was ready, as a peer of Great Britain, to give in another place the most direct answers to any questions that might be put to him.

Pitt felt that he had gone too far at the previous sitting. He now shuffled and equivocated, declaring he had been greatly misunderstood “if it was conceived that he meant to throw out insinuations injurious to the character of the Prince.”

Pitt’s fall from the high horse filled the Opposition with glee. But the subject was not yet disposed of. Fox returned to the charge some days later in a carefully worded speech and spoke on the question of the marriage with deliberation and emphasis. “If allusion were made,” he says, “to a certain low and malicious rumour, which had been industriously propagated without doors, he was authorized to declare it to be a falsehood.”

A private member asked if Fox had spoken from direct authority, who replied emphatically that he had.

This completed the rout of Pitt and his party.

But a succession of shocks awaited Fox that must have shaken his confidence in the Prince. On the day

after the debate he went over to Brooks's, where he met Mr. Orlando Bridgman.

"I see, Mr. Fox," he said, "by the public journals you have denied the Prince's marriage to Mrs. Fitzherbert. You have been misinformed. I was present at the marriage."

Fox was amazed and humiliated by the disclosure, but he had yet to learn the full extent of the Prince's duplicity.

On hearing of Fox's speech the Prince hastened to Mrs. Fitzherbert and exclaimed: "Only conceive, Maria, what Fox did yesterday! He went down to the House and denied you and I were man and wife. Did you ever hear of such a thing?"

For a time Mrs. Fitzherbert was prostrated in an agony of shame by this airy announcement of her humiliation.

The Prince, alarmed by the effect of his tidings, sought for some means of softening the effect of Fox's denial of the marriage.

He sent for one of the youngest and ablest of the Whig leader's lieutenants—Mr. Grey. Grey was a man of the highest probity, and one of the orators of the House of Commons. To him the Prince unfolded his perplexities.

"Charles certainly went too far last night," he said. "You, my dear Grey, shall explain it."

But Grey was too wary to become the mouthpiece of the Prince. He pointed out that Mr. Fox must unquestionably suppose that he had authority for his statement and if any mistake had been made the matter could be put right if his Royal Highness spoke to Fox himself. He clinched the matter in his final sentence: "No other person can be employed

without questioning Mr. Fox's veracity, which nobody, I presume, is prepared to do."

Mr. Grey afterwards told Lord Holland, who records this conversation in his *Memoirs of the Whig Party*, that the Prince was much disappointed and agitated by his decision. After some expressions of annoyance he flung himself on a sofa remarking, "Well, Sheridan must say something."

This conversation, as well as the marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert, was denied thirty years later by the King, as he had now become, after the publication of Moore's *Life of Sheridan*.

Talking on the subject to Mr. Croker he denied that there had been any communications with Lord Grey. He also said that there was no truth in "that absurd story" of his supposed marriage.

Fortunately, the truth or falsity of this interview does not depend on Lord Holland's unsupported testimony. At the time of Croker's talk with the King, Lord Grey was still alive, and his own account entirely bears out Lord Holland's.

From the moment of Grey's refusal, the Prince took a strong dislike to him, which never wavered until the day of his death.

The delicate task of making public amends to Mrs. Fitzherbert was now entrusted to Sheridan. It is impossible to reconcile the irreconcilable, but Sheridan, like the brilliant orator and wit that he was, nerved himself to the effort, and by discharging some rhetorical fireworks, and appealing to the sympathies of the House on behalf of a lady in distress, succeeded in arousing the chivalrous feelings of his hearers. After speaking of the Prince he declared that "there was another person entitled, in the judgment of every



delicate and honourable mind, to the same attention ; one, whom he could not venture otherwise to describe than by saying it was a name which malice or aggrievance alone could attempt to injure, and whose conduct and character were entitled to the truest respect."

Mrs. Fitzherbert was a clear-headed woman, and the report of this speech of Sheridan's—if she ever read it—must have given her very cold comfort. For if she was, as Fox declared, not married to the Prince, though living with him, Sheridan's description of her as the model of all the virtues was meaningless and ridiculous, and must have been utterly unconvincing to those that read it in cold print, undisturbed by the glamour of the orator's voice and presence.

Can we wonder that the Archbishop of Canterbury thought it all "very odd" and expressed surprise that the lady "was more received than she was and stands more forward"?

But though Mrs. Fitzherbert faced her detractors with smiling confidence and a pride that brooked no insult, Fox's declarations that she was no wife wellnigh broke her heart. The Prince told her that Fox had "exceeded his instructions," and as she afterwards told Lord Stourton, she felt bound, as her friends assured her, to accept the word of her husband. She never spoke to Fox again, despite the many attempts he made to renew the friendship.

But for a time Mrs. Fitzherbert's feelings were assuaged, as the Archbishop had hinted, by the attentions of her friends and supporters—she was personally popular and deservedly so. Among her callers were the Duchesses of Devonshire and Portland, and she was invited everywhere.

In marrying Mrs. Fitzherbert the Prince of Wales

had imperilled his succession to the Crown, and set the law at defiance. This he had done in spite of the gravest warnings of his friends and well-wishers. He had sown the seed of "misery and mischief"—but the harvest was to be reaped by his friends. He had branded the woman he had vowed to love and cherish as a wanton, and had by hard lying plunged his best friend into difficulties which could only be resolved by the exposure of his own duplicity.

Among Mrs. Fitzherbert's minor troubles was a visit she received from the instigator of the anti-Popery riots, Lord George Gordon, the mad peer who was about to be tried for libelling the Queen of France. Believing that Mrs. Fitzherbert was in alliance with, or a supporter of, the unfortunate Queen, Lord Gordon forced his way into her house with a subpoena. He was turned out by the servants, but so great was the turmoil caused by this incident that police were called in to protect the Prince's wife, to whom the clamorous attentions of the mob were the reverse of agreeable.

Unfortunately for the unacknowledged wife, this was but a minor example of the embarrassments that followed this ill-starred union.

## CHAPTER III

### THE KING'S HEALTH

**M**AY 1787 found the Prince of Wales in happy and complacent humour. Never since he came of age had his affairs been in such good order. He was in the best of health and spirits, and was once more the Prince Charming that the rakes and dandies imitated, and the ladies openly worshipped. The roseate hue of the future was no longer marred by the cloud created by the Fitzherbert affair.

For a time it had darkened the horizon and threatened disaster and utter ruin. His friends who knew the facts had feared the disclosure that would cast him off from the succession to the Crown and strip him of his honours and dignities. But the luck which proverbially protects the foolish had for once stood him in good stead. There had been angry mutterings in Parliament, but those faithful watchdogs, Fox and Sheridan, had shielded him from harm.

But now his troubles were over. The Government had shouldered the burden of his debts, and he was freed from the pressing and embarrassing attentions of ill-dreaded gentlemen who shouldered their way into his ante-chamber and even accosted him in the street, and asked for settlement of their bills.

True he had been a Prodigal and had been driven from home by a harsh and tyrannical father. But unlike the Prodigal of old his friends had rallied round

him and in the company of the Barrymores, Queensberrys, Lades and Hangers, he had showed an epicurean spirit and washed down the husks of humiliation in bumpers of port and champagne. Moreover the King had so far relaxed as to invite him to Court and talked to him in a gruff but friendly way, while the Queen smiled and the Princesses beamed their happiness at the reconciliation.

The Prince was enraptured, and even took pains to be deferential to his father. With the zeal of the repentant, he took everyone aside at Court, and assured them with strong and picturesque oaths that he was never going to quarrel with his father again. He made promises of amendment that must have caused his intimates exquisite amusement. For there was to be no more extravagance—no sowing of wild oats—no political attacks on the King and his party. All this and much more.

But old friends and habits could not be so easily banished. Feminine charms enticed, the gambling-halls opened wide their doors with hospitable intent, while the race-course beckoned with friendly gesture. The young bloods to whom he was pattern and example looked to him for a lead, and he was too weak and indulgent to say them nay. The younger Whigs, eager to use him as their tool, also hailed him as their chief and promised to make him a political power in the land. Burke's rhetoric and Sheridan's witticisms had their effect, and quickly the lavish promises he had made his father were forgotten.

Before a month elapsed his friends in the House of Commons were making attacks on the King, so gross, that members angrily protested. His Majesty growled with anger, while the Queen's heart filled with a

cold rage. When he visited Windsor the Prince was so coldly received that at last he became a stranger at Court.

Meanwhile the gaming-table renewed its old fascination for the Prince. All promises of retrenchment and amendment were forgotten, and in company with his brother, the Duke of York, he plunged madly into the fashionable pastimes of the town. Sometimes he lost two or three hundred pounds in a night's dissipation.

He became again deeply involved in debt, and had to turn to the money-lenders for help. On his dealings with this fraternity Huish throws a flood of light.

"It was at this time the practice," he says, "of the Jews to frequent the gaming-houses in the morning for the express purpose of purchasing the IOU's of the Prince. If the IOU was for five hundred pounds, a bond or some other solid security was given for six hundred pounds, the Jew selling to the Prince some trifling piece of plate, or an article of jewellery for the extra hundred pounds. The Prince, in some instances, expressed his high displeasure at this traffic in his negotiable securities. But as sometimes he could not discharge his IOU from his immediate funds, it was a system of great convenience to have a resource always at hand by which his honour could be saved."

But the Prince's financial dealings were not always so reputable. At times he had even to seek the help of his German cook Weltjie. Weltjie also came to the rescue when some of the Prince's friends, whom he had proposed for membership, were blackballed at Brooks's. One of them was that Jack Payne whose

name so frequently crops up in every record of the Prince's life. Once when this gentleman made some slighting reference to the Queen, the Duchess of Gordon, who was present, exclaimed, "You little insignificant, good-for-nothing, upstart, pert, chattering puppy, how dare you name your royal master's royal mother in that style!"

The Prince was so angry when his friends were blackballed that he resigned his membership of Brooks's, and resolved to start a club of his own. The indispensable Weltjie was called into council, and soon afterwards a club known as "Weltjie's" came into existence, and flourished exceedingly under the patronage of the Royal princes. Here, free from the restraint of the older members of the Whig party, the gambling craze reached fever-pitch, and some needy members of the club, according to Huish, found their gains from the Prince and the Duke of York a very present help in times of financial stress.

But gambling was not the most expensive of the Prince's tastes. His passion for building which manifested itself first when he came of age was never satiated during his lifetime. We have seen that when his debts were settled by Parliament sixty thousand pounds were granted for the completion of Carlton House. But this was only a beginning. Reconstructions and alterations went on in this residence for more than thirty years, after which the building was demolished. But as if this were not enough the Prince conceived the idea of building himself a lordly pleasure-house at Brighton, which had already become his favourite seaside resort. The first plans for this were furnished by Holland, who afterwards built one of the Drury Lane theatres. The first building was a plain

structure, in the style of a nobleman's mansion of the period.

But the Prince was not satisfied, and the house was altered and enlarged several times. Then he called in Nash, the well-known architect, and the work began all over again. And so for twenty years more Nash and his army of builders and decorators toiled on under "the direct surveillance" of the Prince, creating that huddle of gorgeous *salons*, Chinese galleries, spacious ballrooms, and banqueting-halls known as the Pavilion. The Pavilion still stands, but its grandeur and magnificence have departed with the Prince who dined and danced and took his pleasures there. All that remains to-day is a building that suggests no known style of architecture, gives no impression of nobility or dignity, and is a by-word to all lovers of beauty.

In this ornate and bizarre Palace by the Sea the Prince held high carnival, and the obscure fishing village swiftly developed into a fashionable watering-place. The road from London to Brighton was thronged with curricles and phætons, driven by young bloods, eager to join the Prince in his diversions. He himself set the fashion in extravagant equipages, the most striking of which were crowned with coronets and plumes, and the panels decorated with paintings of cupids and nymphs.

It was while the Prince was staying in the Pavilion in Brighton, in October 1788, that he first heard strange tidings of the King's health. He at once set out for Windsor.

For some time the King's physician, Sir George Baker, had become convinced that his patient's mind was disordered. These symptoms of insanity rapidly

developed. We are told on trustworthy evidence that he walked from room to room in the Palace, "pouring out a stream of ceaseless talk, until he became almost inaudible from hoarseness." His conduct caused the Queen and her daughters profound anxiety and unhappiness, and his feverish agitation at the levee caused much headshaking among his ministers. There was, however, nothing in the King's behaviour to warrant interference or restraint. Evidently this was the Prince's views, for on November 4th, after staying a few days with the Royal Family at Windsor, he decided to return to Brighton on the following day.

But that night stranger events happened at Windsor than had ever occurred in the long history of the Royal Borough. When the Royal Family was at dinner, the King in a sudden access of madness rose from his chair, rushed at the Prince of Wales, and seizing him by the collar dashed him violently against the wall. A scene of confusion followed. The King babbled incoherently, the Queen collapsed in hysterics, while the Prince, who prided himself on his manliness and courage, sat down and wept.

That night no one in the Lodge went to bed, but an ominous silence brooded over this house of vast chambers and gloomy corridors. It was believed that the King would die. Absent members of the household were summoned in hot haste, and the King's physicians and surgeons were in attendance. Miss Burney tells us in her *Diary* that when she was wandering about the galleries she opened a door and found herself in a room in which a crowd of gentlemen were sitting in gloomy silence. Among them were the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York, and Sir George



Baker. This was the King's ante-room. Suddenly the door of his chamber opened, and the King appeared. He gazed at the assemblage with a vacant stare. Then, looking at his favourite son, the Duke of York, he said in a wailing tone, "Yes, Frederick is my friend."

That night Sheridan, the Prince of Wales's confidential adviser, in a letter to a correspondent wrote :

"The doctors say it is impossible to survive it long, if his situation does not take some extraordinary change in a few hours. Since this letter was begun, all articulation seems to be at an end with the poor King ; but for the two hours preceding, he was in a most determined frenzy."

Sheridan's account was not exaggerated. For hours that night his behaviour was that of a maniac. Then he became quieter and talked about religion. This state was followed by a mad frenzy, in which he tried to jump out of a window.

The nature of the King's illness was not publicly disclosed, but the people were uneasy and anxious. The clubs hummed with sensational rumours. On the 6th Pitt received a letter from Windsor describing the dinner-table scene. To him and his fellow-ministers this seemed the beginning of the end, and they waited uneasily for the news that would decide the fate of the Government. Foreign courts were notified on the 12th that the King was not in immediate danger. On the 16th prayer was offered in all parish churches for his recovery.

Meanwhile, the Prince of Wales's own physician, Dr. Warren, was called into consultation, but the King refused to receive him. To overcome this difficulty "Dr. Warren was placed where he could hear his

(the King's) voice, and all that passed, and received intelligence concerning his pulse from Sir George Baker." This gentleman, later, was given the unpleasant task of telling the King that he should now be relieved of the responsibility of transacting business of any kind. Writing under the date of November 20th, George Selwyn, the famous wit and cynic, says in a letter to Lady Carlisle, "To-day, I have heard, is fixed upon to speak reason to one who has none. Dr. Warren in some set of fine phrases is to tell His Majesty that he is stark mad, and must have a strait-waistcoat. I am glad I am not chosen to be that Rat who is to put the bell about the Cat's neck. For if it should please God to forgive our transgressions, and restore His Majesty to his senses, for he can never have them again till we grow better, I suppose, according to the opinion of Churchmen, who are perfectly acquainted with all the dispensations of Providence, and the motive of his conduct; I say, if that unexpected period arrives, I should not like to stand in the place of that man who has moved such an address to the Crown."

But the King did not succumb as everyone had expected. His physical health improved, but he was still hopelessly insane, and it was the opinion of a specialist, Dr. Willis, who now had charge of the Royal patient, that the mental disorder would probably yield to treatment, though it was impossible to say when a cure might be effected.

For the Prince the position was one of unusual difficulty. He was but a young man of twenty-five, without experience or knowledge of State affairs, and there was no dependable friend to whom he could turn for counsel. The one man, C. J. Fox, of whose disinterested friendship he was assured, was

abroad. The Prime Minister, Pitt, who resented his connection with the Whig party, was covertly hostile, while the Queen was an open and vindictive enemy. Had he turned to the staid and more respectable members of the Whig party for advice and shown sympathy and regard for his parents, the undignified struggle for place and power that ensued might have been avoided. As it was, the Prince called into council boon-companions like Master Barry and Sheridan, and the host of place-hunters who shared his pleasures and dissipations. A secret meeting of the Prince and his friends was held at Bagshot at which Sheridan, Mrs. Fitzherbert and Jack Payne were present. At another gathering held for the same purpose, Lord Barrymore's younger brothers and some Eton boys gave the Prince the benefit of their mature wisdom.

The prince's *alter ego*, Jack Payne, was installed at Windsor Castle and under the direction of his master tried his prentice hand at diplomatic correspondence, while Sheridan tackled the political situation in London. The Prince undertook the impossible task of grasping and holding that political jelly-fish, Chancellor Thurlow.

To the Royal household the Prince revealed his character in its more unpleasing aspects. The prospect of banishing the King and Queen to private life and supplanting them as ruler of the kingdom filled him with an exultant joy that he took no pains to conceal. He asserted his authority by subjecting those in attendance on his parents to petty indignities and annoyances. In London he told stories of his father's delirium that must have profoundly disgusted those of his hearers who retained an iota of decency.

The Queen was, however, the especial target of

his malice. The diaries and letters of her ladies-in-waiting afford unmistakable evidence of this. The King's insanity had altered the pattern of her life, and deprived her of her chief prop and support. The anxiety she suffered through the King's paroxysms wrecked her mentally and physically and she was incapable of exercising authority. Realizing this, the Prince took complete command, and assumed the airs and dignity of a monarch. Instead of showing his mother kindness and sympathy, he treated her as an encumbrance. In the time-serving Dr. Warren, the most fashionable doctor of the day, he found a pliant and ready instrument for carrying out his orders. In this he was helped by the cowardice and selfishness of Sir George Baker. In the first stages of the King's delirium, the physician took fright and seemed afraid to approach his patient. Instead of remaining in constant attendance, he feigned illness, and instead of obeying the Queen's summons hurried off to London where he visited Pitt, told him how ill His Majesty was, and then hurried to the Stock Exchange, where he sold out the whole of his funds.

This gave the Prince the excuse he needed, and Warren was appointed principal physician to the King. Afterwards Dr. Willis, who was Pitt's nominee, shared his responsibility, but for the time being Warren was in sole charge. His first step was to forbid the Queen and her daughters to see the King—who was always asking for them—on the ground that His Majesty needed quiet. So the Queen, by the Prince's instructions, was banished to two inconvenient rooms, near the servants' quarters. Here she was studiously ignored. When Dr. Warren came to visit the King, he went away without giving her any

information about her husband's condition, and instead presented his report to the Prince at the Castle. The Queen's ladies and readers were forbidden to visit the Royal residence.

The equerries were also sent away, and the King was left to the tender mercies of pages and servants. He was treated by the doctors like the patients in a common mad-house. The doors and windows of his room were screwed up, lest he should escape, and though it was late in November, no fire was allowed, because these learned physicians wished to abate a fever.

When he recovered from his illness, the King used to relate how at one time he was kept with his arms pinioned behind his back, and his legs tied to the bed-post. As Mrs. Harcourt relates: "The physicians seem to be amusing themselves as they would with any other singular character, and feel no more for him than they would for a dog or a cat."

But Windsor was too dull for the Prince of Wales. He wished to be nearer London and its gaiety. Accordingly he suggested to the doctors that the King should be removed to Kew. After much heart-searching the Queen at last agreed to this, and a meeting of the Privy Council was held to sanction this step. At this meeting it was arranged that the Prime Minister and the Chancellor should interview the King. After being assured by Dr. Warren that the King was incurable, Pitt was surprised, at this interview, to find His Majesty conversing quite sensibly, though he was not able to keep to the same topic for long together. Three times Pitt had journeyed to Windsor to consult the Prince of Wales, but he had not been granted an interview. Again on November 17th he

went down, but this time the Prince definitely refused to see him. On the 23rd, hearing nothing from the Prince, he went to the Queen, and asked if he might bring down Dr. Addington to see the King. Dr. Addington, he explained, was experienced in mental cases, and had attended his famous father Lord Chatham in 1767. After some trouble and formality this was arranged, and on November 28th Pitt brought the doctor to Windsor. The Prime Minister was left standing in the outer court like a menial, while in an adjoining room the Prince, with Dr. Warren, the Chancellor, and other members of the Government, drank wine together, and voted each other jolly dogs.

The King received Dr. Addington as a friend, and hearing that Pitt was outside insisted upon seeing him. Pitt learned from the doctor that the King had been cruelly ill-used, and was convinced that drastic steps must be taken to ensure his health and safety.

When it was fully settled that the King should be taken to Kew the Prince informed his mother that she must either stay at Windsor, or live for a time at her Palace in London.

The Queen refused, and announced that she would go to Kew with her husband.

The Prince showed his displeasure, and exclaimed with vehemence that he was resolved upon it.

"Prince of Wales," she replied, with a spurt of the haughty spirit that had so long been crushed, "do it at your peril. Where the King is I shall be."

The Prince yielded, doubtless consoling himself with the reflection that he had other cards up his sleeve. For this Prince Charming, as he was called by the ladies in London society, as thoroughly understood the art of making himself disagreeable, and

of devising acts of petty malice, as any man of his generation.

On November 27th the King and Queen with the rest of the Royal Household left Windsor for Kew. Here they found that the Prince had been before them and arranged which apartments they were to occupy. The Royal suite was reserved for the Prince of Wales and his brother the Duke of York, while on the doors of other rooms were chalked the names of the prospective occupants. The bedroom allotted to the King was small and dark, and its walls dripped with moisture.

"If we were together," wrote Grenville to his brother the Marquis of Buckingham, "I could tell you some particulars of the Prince of Wales's behaviour towards the King and her (the Queen) within these last few days that would make your blood run cold, but dare not commit them to paper."

Grenville's laudable desire to make his brother's flesh creep may be attributed to the fact that he was a leader of the Government party, and therefore hostile to the Prince. His opinion, like those proclaimed by the opposite faction, should therefore be taken with reserve.

This controversy, partly personal and partly constitutional, spread far beyond the confines of Royal circles. The clubs and coffee-houses hummed with excited discussions on the subject; while the heated debates in Parliament influenced popular feeling and made the readers of news sheets violent partizans, either of the Queen or the Prince of Wales. It was evident to all that as the King was not likely to recover health and sanity for a long time, a Regency must be established. Important questions arising from this

position awaited decision. Should this power be vested in one person or should it be shared by a Council, consisting of the Queen, the Prince of Wales, the Lord Chancellor and other high officials of State? Further, what limitations should be imposed on the Regent—if one only were appointed?

The propagandists in this struggle were the Queen and the Prime Minister on one side; the Prince of Wales and the Whig leader, Fox, on the other. Between the two was the Lord Chancellor, Thurlow, who though a member of the Government watched the sky for omens favourable to his own interests. The controversy was waged with a bitterness and savagery that have no parallel in modern annals.

To both sides the constitutional problems involved, serious as they appeared, were but secondary considerations. Pitt was fighting for his political existence; Fox and his party for the loaves and fishes. For nine years Pitt had been the King's trusted minister. Now his only friend at the Palace was the Queen, whose political influence was nil.

To the Whigs, the King's illness seemed a heaven-sent dispensation. Fox and Sheridan were intimate friends of the Prince of Wales, and they were jubilant in the expectation that his appointment as Regent would seal the fate of the Ministry, and bring them back to power. But their zest for office was as nothing in comparison with their hunger for the Royal Household posts. These were one hundred and fifty in number, and the salaries of these eminently desirable sinecures ranged from £60 to £1800 per annum.

With these spoils of victory in their grasp the Prince could increase his popularity, and Fox and his party their influence. Furthermore, with this patronage



the Whig party would be enabled to increase its voting strength in both Houses of Parliament.

There was consequently much activity behind the scenes, and everyone with political influence, outside Pitt and his intimate circle, was approached and asked to support the Prince of Wales's claims. Jack Payne, who was installed at Windsor, sent out sheaves of letters, and among his correspondents was the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Loughborough. The Prince himself with Fox's assistance tried to win over Chancellor Thurlow, while Sheridan exercised his wit and charm in gaining the support of members of Parliament.

Open warfare quickly succeeded this preliminary marshalling of the forces.

The first shot in the campaign was fired by Pitt, who after a meeting of the Council sent a letter to the Queen asking her to take a share in the Regency. This she declined, and in a letter to the Prince of Wales "authorized His Royal Highness that she would on no account take any part in the political affairs of this Kingdom; it being her determination to remain at Kew, or wherever else His Majesty might be, and to devote herself wholly to him, as his friend and companion."

The Prince replied assuring her that she should be considered as His Majesty's sole guardian, as long as the unhappy malady should continue.

Foiled in his first move, Pitt sought the support of Parliament. When the House reassembled in December he moved in reference to the Regency "That a committee be appointed to examine and report precedents." In offering the strongest opposition to this motion Fox declared that he had not in

his mind a doubt that in the present conditions of His Majesty, "His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales had as clear, as express a right to exercise his power of sovereignty in view of the incapacity with which it had pleased God to afflict the King, as in the event of His Majesty's having undergone a natural demise."

Pitt was exultant when he heard Fox, the most advanced Whig of his generation, speak of the Prince's "rights." "Rights," he exclaimed, striking his knee, "I'll unwhig the gentleman for the rest of his life."

He sprang to his feet as soon as Fox's address was ended and speaking with a vehemence he had never before displayed asserted that Fox's doctrine was little short of being treasonable to the Constitution. The truth was, he declared in scornful tones, that the Prince had no more right than any individual in the community. Here, he added, the rights of the House had been questioned by one of its own members.

Fox's declaration of "the Prince's rights," which Pitt so cleverly construed into an attack on the rights of the House, was a tactical blunder and did great mischief to the Prince's cause.

Seeing that he had gone too far, Fox made a personal explanation to the House in which he said that the Prince had a claim, and was the only one who had a claim to the Regency, which, however, it rested with the House to declare and admit.

This partial withdrawal was not to the taste of Sheridan, the Prince's henchman, who, turning to the ministers, threatened them with his patron's displeasure and pointed out the danger of compelling him to assert his rights.

But the haughty Pitt was not to be intimidated. He scoffed at Sheridan's menaces, declared himself the

defender of the rights of Parliament, and said that "the House would do its duty in spite of any threat, however high the quarter from which it might come."

Pitt's language made the Prince furiously angry. In a letter to the Chancellor he protested bitterly against Pitt's attitude towards him, and complained that he had been treated with disrespect.

The Prince's frown had no terror for Pitt. In the stiff and formal phrases of his reply to this letter the mortification he felt at the petty annoyance he had suffered at the Prince's hand is plainly shown. "I have certainly felt myself bound," he wrote, "rather to wait the command of Your Royal Highness than to intrude on Your Royal Highness's time, without having received a previous intimation of your pleasure; at the same time, Your Royal Highness will permit me to recall to your recollection what I more than once had an opportunity humbly to express my readiness at all times to attend Your Royal Highness; and have several times at Windsor had the honour to inquire whether Your Royal Highness had any orders for me, and have received for answer that you had not."

The Prince left this letter unacknowledged, but he must have felt as he read it that it would have been wiser to have adopted a more conciliatory attitude to the great minister.

He saw, however, that Fox's uncompromising declaration had put him in a false position. So in order to smooth the rising storm he sent his brother the Duke of York to the House of Lords to make a personal statement on his behalf. In this speech, which was well delivered and created a most favourable impression, the young Prince stated that his

brother understood "too well the groundwork of the British Constitution, ever to assume or exercise any power, be his claim what it might, not derived from the will of the people, expressed by their representatives, and their Lordships in Parliament assembled."

This declaration, though well received by their Lordships, had no effect in weakening their support of Pitt and his Ministry.

But the interest of this notable debate was centred in Thurlow's speech. Pitt and his colleagues knew that the Lord Chancellor was in active correspondence with the Prince of Wales and Fox, though still a member of the Government. Pitt confidently expected that he would seize this occasion to announce his allegiance to the Prince, and there was a crowd of members of the Lower House to hear the address.

But Thurlow had no intention of committing himself, yet. His negotiations with Fox were still in progress, and the outlook was too uncertain. So instead of telling the Lords where he stood he spoke of the King and his condition. One passage in the speech has often been quoted as a classical example of the art of double-dealing: "My debt of gratitude to him (the King) is ample for the numerous honours which he has bestowed on me, which, whenever I forget, may my God forget me."

"Oh! the rascal, the rascal," exclaimed Pitt to General Manners who stood beside him.

"Forget you!" said Wilkes. "He'll see you damned first!"

Burke's comment was equally pointed—"Forget you! The best thing that can happen to you."

Thurlow's treachery was an agreeable subject for

the wits, and brought forth a flood of lampoons and caricatures.

After resolutions framed by the Prime Minister, asserting the rights of Parliament to establish a Regency, had been carried in both Houses, a Regency Bill was prepared. Before introducing this measure, Pitt wrote a letter to the Prince of Wales, in which he set out the restrictions it was proposed to lay upon him as Regent. The Prince was much offended by the manner in which this letter was sent to him, and complained that it was left at his door by a servant. But the restrictions imposed made him furious. These were put to the House in the form of resolutions. They debarred him from granting peerages, save to the Royal Family; from giving places, save under conditions; and from selling the King's property. It was also resolved that the care of the King and the management of the Royal Household, and the direction and appointment of its officers and servants, should be given to the Queen.

"I have just received a letter from the ministers," the Prince says, in a hasty note to Lord Loughborough, "with such restrictions as no dictator could possibly, I think, ever have been barefaced enough to have brought forward."

The Regency Bill was assailed with extraordinary virulence by the Opposition in the House of Commons, and the Prince of Wales and his brothers actively canvassed members who were known to be waverers. Sheridan described the Bill as a plan for ruling the country through the Queen. The resolution that reserved Household appointments to present holders, and prevented the Prince from bestowing them on his hungry followers, excited Burke's derision. "The

Lords of the Household," he declared, "would stick to the King's loaf as long as a single cut of it remained; they would fasten on the crust, and gnaw it while two crumbs of it held together; and they would proudly declare, at the same time, that it was the honour of the service, the dignity of the office, which alone they regarded."

Sir G. Elliot, who knew much of what went on behind the scenes, recorded his conviction in a letter to a friend that the plan was "to consider the Prince and everybody that is suspected of the least attachment to him as a prey to be hunted down and destroyed without mercy. This, I assure you, is the private conversation of him (Pitt) and the Queen's whole set."

This faction fight was carried from Parliament to the Country. Pitt gained the support of the great towns, as his father had done a generation before, when as Horace Walpole recorded "it had rained gold boxes." Those who stood to lose or gain by the issue turned the clubs and coffee-houses they frequented into bear-gardens, while at balls and society entertainments keen partizan spirit was displayed.

At the fourth of a series of banquets given at Carlton House, at which many members of both Houses of Parliament were present, the Duke of York made a speech in which he said that "a string of fallacies had been obtruded upon the public"; gave his royal word that not one of the King's children was permitted to approach him and lamented that "the Queen wrought upon by insidious arts, particularly by the machinations of the Chancellor, seemed resolved to abet the daring attempt to supersede his brother's just pretensions and promote the views of those most inimical to him."

As the Bill reached its final stages the leaders of the Opposition began to quarrel among themselves as to the division of the spoil. It seemed certain now that the Prince would as Regent quickly get rid of Pitt and his Ministry, and their turn would come. Some of the staid Whigs noticed with disgust that Sheridan's influence with the Prince was supreme. The Duke of Portland declared that one could take no step as long as Sheridan was keeper of the Prince's conscience. Burke was also jealous of the famous orator and dramatist. While Fox, who had no taste for intrigue of this kind, withdrew to the country on the plea of ill-health.

At last in the first week in February the Prince's plans were all but complete. He expected to become Regent of the kingdom on the 14th. Most of the principal officers of State had been appointed. The Duke of York was to be Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Field-Marshal were to be created, and the Prince himself was to be one of these. Sheridan had received the plan of the rooms in the new Somerset House he was to occupy as Treasurer of the Navy, while even a Bishop had been chosen for the vacant See of St. Asaph's.

But the stately edifice so skilfully built in Carlton House tumbled about the ears of its makers when news arrived from Windsor that the King was much better, and that his complete recovery was only a matter of weeks. Dr. Warren, who was watching the Prince's interests at Windsor, was compelled to certify on February 17th that the King was convalescent. Two days later the Chancellor, in a statement to the House of Lords, said it would be indecent to proceed with the Regency Bill further, in view of the state of

His Majesty's health, and he proposed an adjournment of the House for a week.

But the Chancellor was, as usual, playing a double game. He saw the King on the 20th, and reported to Pitt that His Majesty was quite recovered. To the Duke of York he adopted a different strain.

"By God," he said regretfully, "they always contrive to wind up the King when I am to see him, and he appears very well before me."

The Princes were mystified by the contradictory reports they received, so they paid several visits to Kew to discover the truth for themselves. But on no occasion were they allowed to see the King. The Prince of Wales then wrote a long letter to the Queen asking permission to see his father, but that if the physicians thought this undesirable, and likely to retard His Majesty's recovery, "the Prince for his future justification with the King, may receive that opinion in writing, signed by them."

A few days later the Princes were granted an interview with the King, who received them with affection. Filled with fury, as they were, against Pitt who had balked them at every turn and brought their plans to nought, they were anxious to explain matters fully to the King, when he would see Pitt's conduct in its worst light. But no opportunity was afforded them of stating their case. The Queen was present at the interview, walking backwards and forwards in the room with an air of impatience as though she were anxious for their departure, while the King, who now knew all about the Regency Bill, took care that the conversation should be general, and vetoed any allusion to politics.

Though the King had now recovered, the Queen



and her sons remained unreconciled. Queen Charlotte was implacable and sought every opportunity of displaying her rancour. The Princes were at first apparently anxious to be reconciled. But she repelled every advance, and on more than one occasion, notably in that of the duel between the Duke of York and Colonel Lennox, showed an unmaternal hatred of her own children.

The King's recovery was the signal for national rejoicing. Parliament voted him addresses. The City and the chief provincial towns were illuminated in honour of his recovery, and the populace greeted His Majesty with frenzied joy when he made his first public appearance.

To Sir G. Elliot we owe an account of what happened on this night of general rejoicing. After dining at Lord Hertford's the Prince and the Duke of York went on to the Opera in the Prince's coach. "In some of the narrow streets the coach was stopped by other carriages, and the mob soon knew the Princes. They called 'God save the King!' while the Prince, letting down his glasses, joined them in calling very heartily. But one man called out to him to cry 'Pitt for ever!' or 'God bless Pitt!' The Prince said he would not; but called out 'Fox for ever, and God bless Fox!' The man, and I believe some others, began to insist on his saying, 'Pitt for ever'; and I believe he said 'Damn Pitt—Fox for ever!' on which a man pulled the coach door open, and the Prince endeavoured to jump out among them in order to defend himself; but the Duke of York kept him back with one arm, and with the other struck the man on the head, and called to the coachman to drive on. From the Opera the Prince chose to walk about the streets to

see the illuminations. He was soon known, but not insulted, and several people called 'God bless Your Highness,' which he was much pleased with. At St. James' he fell in with a gang of butchers with marrow-bones and cleavers, who knew him and began to play before him, and he found it impossible to get rid of them. They accordingly cleared the way for him, playing and shouting all the way up St. James' Street. When they came to Brooks's they gave him three cheers. He then sent them ten guineas to drink."

Episodes like this earned the Prince the admiration of the young people of his generation. Thackeray has said that there was no greater satire on the society of that time than that it admired George. But it should not be forgotten that this admiration was confined to a limited section composed largely of hangers-on and boon companions who hoped ultimately to benefit by his favour and influence. His courtliness, his charm of manner, his high spirits, his impulsive generosity and infectious gaiety counted to him for righteousness with those who came into personal contact with him. These, however, were but the few, and the tide of public opinion ran strangely against the young Prince.

By the people as well as by those who moved in Court circles he was regarded as an undutiful son and faithless friend. His indifference to his father's sufferings, his feud with the Queen and his hostility to Pitt, put the seal on his unpopularity.

The celebrations in honour of the King's recovery were followed by a violent quarrel between the Queen and the Prince when the latter tried to gain access to his father. In a violent outburst the Queen told him "that she would not be the channel of any-

thing that either he or the Duke of York had to say to the King, and that the King did not mind what either he or the Duke of York did or said or thought."

But the Queen did not let matters rest here. A dinner and entertainment were given at Windsor to those who had shown sympathy with the King in his illness. For this the Prince of Wales and his brother received no formal invitation. But before it was held the Queen sent for the Duke of York and told him that he and his elder brother would be welcome if they attended, but she wished him clearly to understand that only those who had supported the King's party during the late crisis were being invited, and that therefore he might not care to attend. This plain charge of being hostile to the King was too much for the Prince and the Duke of York, who talked angrily of sending letters of remonstrance to their father and mother. But wiser counsels prevailed, and on the advice of the Duke of Portland and Burke, a conciliatory letter was sent to the Queen in which they said that "we cannot allow any circumstances whatever to debar us from the happiness of paying our duty to the King, and that we shall have the highest pleasure in attending His Majesty at the concert on Thursday."

The entertainment was a party demonstration and emphasised Pitt's triumph over his political foes. Before his place at supper was a figure of Fame with the arms of the Pitt family and the number 268, the first majority in the House of Commons, inscribed in sweetmeats. The music at the concert had also a political flavour, while the ladies wore favours of "garter blue," the colours of the Government party. The King received his sons affectionately, which was

evidently displeasing to his Consort. It was noted by Government supporters that the Prince and his brother hardly spoke a word to any of the Royal Family and seemed ill at ease among the ministers and other adherents of the Queen.

The bitterness between the factions was manifested again at the ball given by White's Club, at the Pantheon. Here the company expressed their loyalty in uproarious and extravagant fashion. Dr. Willis, the physician, was the hero of the occasion, and was hailed as the saviour of the Throne, and according to Sir G. Elliot "all but mad and out of himself with transport." Neither the Prince nor the Duke of York attended this function, but instead, as their enemies reported, went round to all their supporters and asked them not to attend the ball.

But the most rancorous display of party feeling was shown when the King went to St. Paul's on April 23rd to give thanks for his recovery. There were rival demonstrations as the Royal party passed to and from the Cathedral. Outside Carlton House the King was received in silence, while the Prince was loudly cheered; but in the City His Majesty received an ovation.

Instead of lessening, the breach between the Queen and her eldest son seemed to grow wider, as Her Majesty's influence over her enfeebled husband grew stronger. The patronage of the King's Civil List was now entirely in her hands and she applied this power remorselessly where the Prince's friends were concerned. In a letter which he wrote to Lord Cornwallis on May 30th, 1789, the Prince of Wales comments on this with bitterness.

"The King is convalescent, that is to say, he cer-

tainly is better. Everything is thrown into the hands of the Queen. Every friend that supported me and the common cause of succession of the Family, if they had any place have been dismissed, such as the Duke of Queensberry ; and our little friend Lothian Queensberry has been dismissed by order of the Queen and Mr. Pitt from the Bedchamber. Lothian has left his regiment of Horse Guards, and they have had the insolence to threaten the Duke of York with taking his regiment of Foot Guards, and when they at last did not dare to do that, they have brought officers into his regiment, and committed towards him every species of indignity to force him to resign. Not only three great officers, but members of a lower class, whose sole dependence in life depended upon their places, have been disgracefully dismissed from their offices for the disinterested support of me and our Family."

The Queen, aided by Pitt, had been victorious all along the line, and the pleasure-loving Prince found, as this letter shows, the cup of defeat a bitter draught. But he was yet to taste further humiliation.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PRINCE RACES

**T**HOUGH but two years had elapsed since Parliament came to his aid and paid his debts, the Prince's affairs in 1789 were heavily involved. A further sum of £55,000 had been spent on building and furniture at Carlton House, and immense sums on other frivolities. The Prince's promises to retrench and economise were forgotten as soon as Parliament paid his debts, and with the optimism of the spendthrift he squandered money at the gaming-table and on the race-course more recklessly than ever.

He was now at his wits' end for money. The sum of his debts was mounting daily. Carlton House was besieged by creditors. Some of them even stopped him in the streets and begged him to save them from ruin, by paying them something on account, while the workmen at Carlton House presented a petition to the Prime Minister, asking for payment of their wages.

Two years before the King had settled the Prince's affairs with the help of Parliament. But it was now useless to apply in either of these quarters for assistance. The Queen, whose influence with the King was supreme, hated him, while Pitt and his Government bore the Prince no love.

Driven into a corner the Prince and his brother resorted to dubious means of raising the wind. The Prince's cook Weltjie, who had occasionally lent his

master money, was called into council and after making inquiries introduced a Mr. John Cator of the Adelphi to his master. This gentleman provided £10,000 on the condition of being repaid treble the amount, when either the Prince or his brothers the Dukes of York and Clarence ascended the throne; £30,000 was also obtained in £100 bonds repayable in twelve years. No interest, it is said, was ever paid on these bonds.

Mrs. Harcourt mentions in her Diary that Lord Kingsborough told her that the Prince had been offering £10,000 and an Irish peerage after the King's death for every £5,000, but that even on these terms he could get little.

As the sums obtained at home were inadequate, the Prince decided to try and raise money abroad. The Dukes of Portland and Northumberland were consulted and they offered their fullest co-operation. But they suggested that instead of offering usurious terms as in the former loans, all the money needed could be raised by offering good security and fair interest. To this the Royal Princes agreed. So that instead of again resorting to the undignified method of borrowing on post-obits, a sum of about £100,000 was raised on the security of the Duchy of Cornwall and Bishopric of Osnaburg. The loan was subscribed in Antwerp by the house of Werbrouck, and a French financier, De Beaume, was joined in the security with the three royal brothers. The trustees to receive the interest were the Dukes of Portland and Northumberland, Lord Southampton and Lord Rawdon.

This affair, like so many of the Prince of Wales's financial transactions, ended in disaster. At the time the Prince's agent De Beaume went to Paris to sell

his bond, the French Revolution had begun its course, and Throne, Church and feudal system were uneasily rocking on their foundations. The nobility and gentry were leaving the country and trying to convert their property into portable form. As the Prince's bonds were not subject to exchange fluctuations, and were easily negotiable, they were eagerly bought by the *émigrés*.

The results of this transaction were appalling. The Royal Princes received in cash and jewels more than £100,000, but no interest was ever paid, and those who took up the bonds lost their money. This affair caused a grave scandal both at home and abroad. The King was furious when he heard of it, and was particularly annoyed that his third son, then a mere youth, should have been drawn into so dubious a transaction. The bond-holders were clamorous for justice, and the Duke of Portland who was then Home Secretary received many complaints from Carlton House about some of these foreign creditors who were most troublesome in demanding their money. We have the authority of Huish for the statement that twenty-six foreigners, creditors of the Prince, who placed implicit reliance on his faith and honour, were sent out of England, though no charge was preferred against them.

It is however only fair to state that the Prince of Wales on many occasions denied the receipt of any consideration for some of the bonds issued from Paris, and more than once issued warnings about spurious bonds in circulation.

These financial transactions occasioned much controversy in the public prints, and several pamphlets on the subject were published on the Continent. One



of the causes of the Prince's difficulties was his inveterate passion for horse-racing. His racing stable cost him thirty thousand pounds a year, and he considered it money well spent ; for he had a genuine love for horses, and withal sufficient judgment and sagacity to turn his sport to profit. Horse dealers were constant visitors at Carlton House, and among the crowds of callers who waited in the ante-chamber of that ill-omened establishment they were the most cordially welcomed. The Prince was always ready to try the paces of any shapely horse, whether hack or hunter, that was brought round for his inspection, and as the sporting writers of the time declared "he cared very little what Milton or any other dealer chose to ask for a clever hack."

He was fond of hunting, but this was scarcely a sport for a man of his weight, and he was never known as a forward rider. But his keenness was undeniable and he enjoyed every moment he gave to the pastime. He hunted mostly in Hampshire and his hounds came from the kennels of the Duke of Richmond at Goodwood. Among the thoroughbreds he rode were a number that had distinguished themselves on the Turf.

At the Grange, the property of Lord Ashburton, which was his hunting-seat, the Prince enjoyed for a time a respite from the cares and dissipation of town, and found its peace and quiet a welcome contrast to the hectic round of his everyday life.

His groom was Jack Radford, whose name is well known to those familiar with the life-story of the last Duke of Queensberry ("Old Q"). When the Duke was stricken in years it was his custom to sit at his bow-window in Piccadilly ogling the ladies who

passed by. Below was his groom Jack Radford, ready mounted, waiting to ride after any friend or acquaintance that his master recognized. So satisfactory were Radford's services that at the Duke's death he received an annuity of two hundred pounds, together with all his master's horses and carriages.

The Prince won his new groom's regard by his love for horse-flesh. Radford was wont to descant at large on this topic, and was often heard to declare in his enthusiasm that horses were the sole subject of the Prince's thought, and even of his dreams. If he fancied a racer he would buy him at any price. When Lord Darlington in later years bid 1100 guineas for a well-known horse at Lord H. Fitzroy's sale, he received a friendly hint that it was no use going on as the King had instructed Mr. Radford to secure the animal at any price. "Indeed," as the author of *Post and Paddock* tells us, "the Prince was most liberal with money, as long as he did not see it. Cheques he would sign away to any amount, even £300 for 'Pea-green Haynes's dressing-box.' But when he had a fifty-pound note in his pocket, it was a bitter pang for him to spend five pounds of it."

The Prince had many successes on the Turf. His stud at first consisted only of four or five horses, but it was gradually increased until in 1791—three years later—there were forty-one racers in his stables.

His first win was with Anvil at Newmarket, for a stake of £60. Very soon afterwards—in 1788—he won the Derby. Thereafter his colours were popular with the crowd, and deservedly so, for in the four years—1788 to 1792—he had the good fortune to win one hundred and eighty-five races. These included eighteen King's Plates, with a valuable stake

now and then of three or four thousand guineas. His aggregate for the four years amounted to more than £30,000.

From 1800 to 1807 he won a hundred and seven races. Altogether, according to Lord W. Lennox's calculation, he won three hundred and thirteen races in twenty years.

But in the autumn of 1791 a grave scandal arose about the running of the horse *Escape*. This horse had been bred in the Prince's stables, and bought by a Mr. Francis when the stud was sold in 1787. Two years later the Prince again acquired *Escape* and paid £1500 for him. When he was a four-year-old *Escape* was considered by many shrewd judges the king of the racing world, and capable of beating anything on four legs. So that when on October 20th, 1791, he was beaten by two inferior horses great was the consternation among betting men. Backers and bookmakers looked at him askance, after burning their fingers over him, and it was generally thought that he would come in at the end of the procession in next day's race. So confirmed were they in this opinion that bets were made to a large amount and at heavy odds that *Escape* would lose.

But contrary to general expectations *Escape* won the second race. As he had been ridden on both occasions by Sam Chifney, the Prince of Wales's favourite jockey, some explanation of the horse's running was obviously required. The angry losers alleged foul play, and so fierce grew the storm of accusation and denial, that the Jockey Club held an inquiry on the matter. Years later the Prince's jockey gave his version of this unfortunate affair in a pamphlet entitled "*Genius Genuine*, by Samuel

Chifney of Newmarket ; containing a full account of the Prince's horse Escape running at Newmarket on the 20th and 21st days of October 1791." In this essay Chifney states that in the first race which he lost, Escape was not in a fit condition to run, for want of proper exercise ; but that the exercise had opened his pores and enabled him to do himself justice in the second race. But the sportsmen of the day scouted this simple explanation and it was alleged that His Royal Highness on the morning of the first race sent the groom away and gave the horse a pail of water just before the race, in consequence of which the horse was winded and easily beaten.

Chifney's account of what happened after the second race is worth repeating. "As I came from scale, I was told that Mr. W. Lake (the manager of the Prince's horses) had been saying something improper to His Royal Highness concerning Escape's winning. I made it therefore my business to go immediately to His Royal Highness, and he accosted me with the following words :

'Sam Chifney, as soon as Escape's race was over, Mr. Lake came up to me and said, "I give Your Royal Highness joy ; but I am sorry the horse has won. I would sooner have given a hundred guineas." I told Mr. Lake that I did not understand him,—that he must explain himself.'

"I then answered saying, 'Yes, Your Royal Highness, it is very necessary that he should explain himself.'

"On the morning after the race the Prince sent for me and said, 'Sam Chifney, I have sent for you on some very unpleasant business. I am told that you won six or seven hundred pounds upon the first race when you rode Escape and were beaten upon him.'

I replied that I believe His Royal Highness had not such an opinion of me.

“His Royal Highness continued: ‘I am told that you won six hundred pounds yesterday when you rode Escape and won with him, and I am told the clerk of the stables won all the money for you.’

“I answered, ‘May I not offend by asking who it was that dared to tell Your Royal Highness so?’

“He replied, ‘I wish to know whether you have any objection to take your affidavit, naming all the bets you had upon the race, every way when you rode Escape and was beaten upon him on the day before yesterday?’ I acknowledged my readiness to do it.

“His Royal Highness said, ‘Sam Chifney, I wish to know if you have any objection against being examined by the Jockey Club, and in any way that they are pleased to think proper?’ To which I fully and freely consented.

“On the same morning His Royal Highness called me across the betting ring, and he put me between himself and Sir Charles Bunbury, and then rode out upon the Heath. After he and Sir Charles had talked upon the subject, His Royal Highness said, ‘Sam Chifney, I think you told me that you were willing to be examined by the Stewards of the Jockey Club in any way they should think proper?’ I said, ‘Your Royal Highness, I am proud to meet any man upon the subject.’ The Prince then addressed himself to Sir Charles Bunbury. ‘There, Sir Charles, you hear him say that he is proud to meet any man upon the subject. Now, Sir Charles, I beg of you to take every pains so as to make yourself perfectly satisfied; and then enclose me Sam Chifney’s affidavit, and apprise me how the business ends.’

“Soon after this I received from the clerk to the Jockey Club copies of affidavits which I had sworn, naming that I had no bet upon the race when I rode Escape on the 20th of October, and that I had twenty guineas and no more betted upon Escape on the following day, and that I had the same desire of winning upon the horse when I rode him on the 20th as I had when I rode him on the following day.

“I was then had up before the Stewards of the Jockey Club.” At this examination Chifney was closely questioned about his bets on Escape. But he stoutly maintained that he had stated the whole truth of the matter in his affidavits. But Sir Charles Bunbury, who had taken the leading part in this investigation, was apparently dissatisfied with the jockey’s answers about the bets. Turning to him with a severe air he asked :

“What was your motive for waiting with Escape in the first race ? ”

Chifney then explained to the Stewards that his motive for holding in the horse was that he knew it could go very fast, and that as he had ridden against Escape’s opponents in most of their other races, he thought he knew exactly what they could do. The other Stewards at the hearing expressed their satisfaction with Chifney’s explanation, but Sir Charles Bunbury said nothing.

Some weeks later, Chifney was summoned to Carlton House to see the Prince, who told him that Sir Charles Bunbury had called upon him, and declared that if he allowed Chifney to ride his horses no gentleman would ride against him.

The Prince regarded this as a polite intimation that he was warned off the Turf and that he or his servant

had been guilty of a fraud on the racing public. He could have taken the easy way out and escaped the odium attached to the transaction by repudiating his jockey. But in this transaction he behaved chivalrously, refused to throw Chifney to the wolves, and instead stood manfully by him throughout the unpleasant business. He told Sir Charles Bunbury that if he or any other person could make it appear that Chifney had done wrong he would never speak to the jockey again, but without that he would not sacrifice him to any person.

At a later interview the Prince spoke highly of Chifney's integrity, and told him that the two hundred guineas he paid him was for life, saying, "I cannot give it for your life, I can only give it for my own."

Years later the Prince met Chifney on the Steyne at Brighton. Chifney told him that the racing people missed him very much at Newmarket, to which the Prince replied, "Sam Chifney, there has never been a proper apology made and they used you and me very ill. They are a bad people. I'll not set my foot on the ground any more."

The Prince so much resented the treatment he received over this affair that he could never be induced to visit Newmarket again. Fourteen years later when he was staying at Brighton a deputation of members of the Jockey Club waited upon him and informed him that a meeting of the Club had just been held in the seaside town, at which the following resolution had been carried with acclamation :

"May it please Your Royal Highness, the members of the Jockey Club, deeply regretting your absence from Newmarket, earnestly entreat the affair may be buried in oblivion, and sincerely hope that the different

meetings may again be honoured by Your Royal Highness's condescending attendance."

The Prince received the deputation graciously, accepted the olive-branch so humbly offered and promised to patronise Newmarket again,—but he never did so. Instead, he went regularly to Ascot, and some of the less important meetings.

In 1828, towards the end of his short reign, he gave a Jockey Club dinner, at which he received the members with charming hospitality, twice toasted the Club, and expressed the hope that this would be the first of similar annual meetings under his roof.

The question still remains,—were the Prince and his jockey guilty of a fraud on the racing public? The Prince's friends—and among them were men of the highest integrity—believed that he was ill-used in this affair.

It is recorded in Lord Malmesbury's Diaries that Colonel St. Leger told him that Lake, the Prince's Master of Horses, was the whole cause of the Newmarket affair.

This is probably the truth.



## CHAPTER V

### THE DANDIES

NEARLY forty years elapsed between the Prince's first appearance in public, and his succession to the Throne.

Much had happened in the interval. The handsomest and most elegant Prince in Christendom had become fat and ungainly. Many of his boon companions of former days had vanished, but he still followed the round of dissipation and folly with the same zest as when first his uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, introduced him to the pleasures of the town. Once he had been known as "The First Gentleman in Europe," and this not because he possessed any sterling qualities but because of his handsome appearance, his courtly bow, and air of distinction. Rarely have a few parlour tricks gained a man so enviable a position!

Memories of the period offer some remarkable instances of the behaviour of this Prince Charming. From an unpublished Diary of Lord Robert Seymour, —son of the first Marquis of Hertford—who died in 1831, Mr. G. W. E. Russell in his *Collections and Recollections* quoted the following. The year is 1788. "The Prince of Wales declares that there is not an honest Woman in London, excepting Lady Parker and Lady Westmorland, and these are so stupid he

can make nothing of them ; they are scarcely fit to blow their own noses.

“ At Mrs. Vaneek’s assembly last week, the Prince of Wales, very much to the honour of his polite and elegant behaviour, measured the breadth of Mrs. V. behind with his handkerchief, and shew’d the measurement to most of the company.

“ Another trait of the Prince of Wales’s respectful conduct is that at an assembly he beckoned to the poor old Duchess of Bedford across a large room, and when she had taken the trouble of crossing the room, he very abruptly told her he had nothing to say to her.”

In the same Diary there is an account of a visit to Newmarket the Prince made in company with the Duke of Orleans and his natural brother L’Abbé de la Fai. In conversation with the Prince the Abbé boasted of his ability to charm a fish out of the water. The Prince was sceptical, and a bet was made. The Abbé then stooped down over the water to tickle the fish with a little switch. Fearing some trick on the Prince’s part, the Abbé expressed the hope that His Highness would not use him unfairly by throwing him into the water. The Prince declared on his honour that he had no intention of doing anything of the kind. Thus reassured the Abbé set to work in earnest. He leaned down over a little bridge, whereupon the Prince promptly took him by the heels and threw him into the water, which at this point was rather deep. The Duke of Orleans, greatly affronted by this action of the Prince’s, ran to his brother’s assistance. The Abbé was beside himself with rage, and as soon as he scrambled from the water seized a horse-whip and rushed at the Prince, loudly declaring that he thought very meanly of a Prince who could

not keep his word. To escape the threatened horse-whipping the Prince bolted for the Inn where he locked himself in one of the rooms.

The bucks roared with delight when these stories made the round of the clubs, and expressed their admiration of the young Prince with exuberance and profanity.

But it was when he dressed himself up for some important function that he won the whole-hearted admiration of these Dandies. When they beheld him at his first Court Ball—in a coat of pink silk, with white cuffs, his waistcoat white silk, embroidered with various coloured foil, and adorned with a profusion of French paste, his hat ornamented with two rows of steel beads, five thousand in number with a button and a loop of the same metal, and cocked in a military style—then their enthusiasm knew no bounds, and the fingers that held the quizzing glasses were tremulous with emotion. Even the Beau himself, the high priest of fashion in late years, nodded grave approval of the Prince's taste in dress.

For then Fashion had as many votaries among men as Sport or Politics, and the cut of a coat, or the style of a neck-cloth was, in the eyes of many, as important as the fate of empires. Men of quality who ignored the decrees of the Dandies were regarded as eccentrics.

George Bryan Brummell was possessed of wit; he had more than average abilities, and was audacity personified. It is probable that a man with such a temperamental equipment would have achieved some measure of success in any era. But in none but his own, or that of the Macaronis which preceded it, could he have achieved so authoritative a position.

Like all men who gain distinction in any walk of life, Brummell displayed marked originality. He eschewed the florid and ostentatious, and aimed at neatness and elegance of dress. Those around him were foppishly arrayed in magnificent attire. Brummell's tailoring struck a new note. He believed in simple elegance. Byron, who knew and admired the Beau, said that he dressed with exquisite propriety.

At one bound Brummell achieved fame and influence. The recognition which statesmen, warriors and authors only achieve after toilsome years, came to him in a day.

He invented the starched cravat, and thereafter society bowed down and worshipped him, and he became the despot of fashion.

When Brummell came of age and set up his establishment in Chesterfield Street, he was monstrously dissatisfied with the neck-cloths men of fashion were wearing. These were limp and ungraceful, and detracted from an elegant appearance. After a little study and experiment he evolved a cravat in neat folds that looked smart and distinguished.

The first day that he appeared in Piccadilly in this "creation" Brummell was the most discussed man in London. The war, the latest scandal, the daily conflict between Pitt and Fox, were all eclipsed before this sphere-shattering event. The Dandies in the clubs talked of nothing else and asked each other how Brummell had achieved the miracle. Scores of poems and satires were printed on the subject, and even a book entitled, *Neckclothitania, or Tietania: being an Essay on Starches. By one of the Cloth.*

"It is my folly that is the making of me," Brummell confessed once to Lady Hester Stanhope, and the

admission convinced that shrewd lady that the Beau was anything but a fool.

His affectations and calculated arrogance brought Mayfair to his feet. The greatest noblemen consulted him about their clothes.

“Bedford, did I hear you call this thing a coat?” he exclaimed when the Duke asked his opinion about a new coat he was wearing.

He was equally rude to the Duchess of Rutland. Meeting her at a ball he held up his hands in horror, and in an agonized whisper said: “In Heaven’s name, my dear Duchess, what is the meaning of that extraordinary back of yours? I declare I must put you in a back-board. You really must walk out of the room backwards that I mayn’t see it.”

There is more wit and less insolence in his reply to an inquiry how he had caught cold.

“The scoundrally landlord put me in a room with a damp stranger.”

The story of the Beau’s encounter with Sheridan has been so often told that it is unnecessary to record more than Sheridan’s comments on Brummell’s long *apologia* for his presence at Charing Cross.

“The fact is, my dear boy, I have been to the d-a-m-n’d c-i-t-y—to the Bank . . .” said Beau Brummell in reply to Sheridan’s inquiry.

“Nay, my good fellow! Travelling from the East! after all that is surely impossible; you must be joking.”

“Why, my dear boy?—Why?”

“Because the wise men came from the East.”

“So then, sir, you think me a fool, do you?”

“By no means, but I *know* you to be one.”

“I tell you what, my friend Sherry, I shall cut you

for this impertinence, depend on it. I mean to-night at the Opera to send the Prince to Coventry for the next twelve months, and you shall accompany him."

Of the many stories concerning the Regent and the Beau, one-half are obviously untrue, while the rest are founded on evidence of doubtful value. Of the "Who's your fat friend?" story there are five or six versions, any of which may or may not be true. But there can be little doubt that the Beau uttered the famous phrase in the hearing of the Regent, that the Prince was furious at the insult and that London was highly amused by Brummell's mocking audacity and repeated it with glee.

According to General Upton a reconciliation took place, and the Beau was invited to a dinner at Carlton House at which he himself was present. On this occasion Brummell was at his best. Delighted at the reconciliation with his old friend he was in the gayest spirits and kept the table in a roar by his quips and repartees.

And now came the Regent's opportunity to settle old scores. Pretending alarm at the Beau's apparent high spirits, the Regent, in a tone loud enough for the whole company to hear, said to the Duke of York: "I think we had better order Mr. Brummell's carriage before he gets drunk."

The bell was rung, and Brummell with a low bow to the Prince, who had invited him to his table only for the purpose of insulting him, departed from Carlton House for the last time.

From then onwards it was war to the knife between these potentates of fashion. Nor was it an unequal struggle. The Regent enjoyed immense prestige and influence, and a hundred London hostesses trembled

at his nod, but he was powerless to injure the Beau, who strutted through ball and assembly rooms like a monarch among his subjects, and treated the gay fashionable crowd with airy condescension. He was as audacious and imperturbable as ever, and received in the houses of the great nobles as an honoured and privileged guest. For years his position was impregnable.

But at last the gaming-table effected what his enemies were powerless to achieve. He caught the fever for gambling and wagered large sums on the game of hazard. He lost heavily. Then one night when he left White's Club after a run of bad luck he picked up a crooked sixpence in Berkeley Square. "This will bring me good luck," he remarked to a friend as he eagerly picked it up. For a time it was so. In the next two years he won £36,000 at the card-table, and £8000 at Newmarket. As his gains increased the deeper he plunged, so that at last he was wagering sums far beyond his means. Then fortune frowned, and the Beau sustained crashing losses. To recoup these he plunged more desperately than ever, with disastrous results. His friends came to his aid with money and counsel—but in vain. They could only retard, they could not stop this mad race to social suicide.

At last Brummell's affairs became so desperate that he decided to leave England for a time until his affairs were in better shape. On the evening of his departure he sent a note to Scrope Davies, who, like himself, was a wit, in the following terms :

"MY DEAR SCROPE,

Lend me two hundred pounds. The banks



*W. T. Mansell, Photo*

GEORGE, PRINCE OF WALES (GEORGE IV)

*After T. Lawrence*





are shut, and all my money is in the three per cents. It shall be paid to-morrow morning.

Yours,  
GEORGE BRUMMELL."

To this Davies replied :

"MY DEAR GEORGE,  
It is very unfortunate ; but all my money is in the three per cents.

Yours,  
S. DAVIES."

That night Brummell went to the Opera, where he was as cordially welcomed as ever. He amazed one of his friends there by calmly telling him that his position was desperate, and that he was leaving that night for France. But to the rest his manner was as cool, audacious, and insolent as of yore.

As soon as he left the Opera, Brummell entered his carriage, drove all night to Dover, and the next day took up his abode in Calais.

He never returned to England. For years he lorded it in Calais as a man of fashion among the English visitors and residents, and maintained a regular correspondence with several of his old friends. For a few years he presented a brave front to the world. But with a straitened income and steadily mounting liabilities he was at last involved in a morass of debts that brought him to a pestilential French prison. From this abode of felons he was rescued by his friends, only to end his days in a mad-house in 1840.

Only once did he see his friend of former days, the Prince of Wales. This was in 1821 when the Prince, now George IV, visited Calais on his way to Hanover.

Like the rest of the inhabitants of the little French town, the poor exiled dandy was in a flutter of expectation when he learnt that the English King was coming. Though he knew George's hard, unforgiving nature, he dared to hope that his forlorn condition might move his old friend and boon companion to compassion.

A great crowd had collected outside the hotel where the King was to stay, and Brummell was returning from his daily walk to his lodgings when a carriage drove up and the King dismounted. Brummell's landlord gives a vivid account of this encounter: "I was standing at my shop door," he said, "and saw Mr. Brummell trying to make his way across the street to my house, but the crowd was so great that he could not succeed, and was obliged to remain on the opposite side. All hats were taken off as the carriage approached, and when it was close to the door I heard the King say in a loud voice: 'Good God! Brummell!' The latter who was uncovered at the time now crossed over, as pale as death, entered the house by the private door, and retired to his room without addressing me."

A magnificent banquet was prepared that night at Dessein's Hotel for the King, and Brummell's valet who was skilled in such matters attended to prepare the punch. Brummell also instructed his servant to take in some very fine maraschino, of which he knew the King was very fond.

The next day nearly every member of the King's suite called on Brummell, and urged him to ask for an audience with the King, but this was too much for the Beau's pride, and he would do no more than write his name in the visitors' book at the hotel.

But the King took no notice of these tentative advances. He left Calais without making any sign, and with his departure vanished Brummell's hopes of Royal favour.

The memoirs and diaries of the period are full of the pranks of Dandies who were no less reckless than Beau Brummell. People of higher character and greater ability have almost passed into oblivion, whilst these Dandies have been immortalized by their eccentricities. There was Lord Alvaney, wit and gambler, whose pleasing habit it was to put out his candle by throwing the bolster at it, or putting it under his pillow. Another was Lord Fife, who when an old man took a fancy to a dancer and spent £80,000 on her.

"Ball" Hughes, or "Golden Ball" as he was known to his intimates, had an income of £40,000 a year and spent a considerable proportion of it on pitch-and-toss, and battledore and shuttlecock, on which manly sports he wagered immense sums.

No discriminating observer would have enrolled Charles Howard, eleventh Duke of Norfolk, among the Dandies. He generally appeared in public in an old-fashioned grey coat, black breeches, and black worsted stockings.

Though not one of the Dandies, "Jockey" of Norfolk had much in common with them, and shared their pleasures and pursuits. He was on intimate terms with the Prince of Wales, and as he was a witty and original conversationalist he was an oft-invited guest at convivial gatherings at the Pavilion.

He took a keen interest in politics, and when little more than a boy challenged the Lowther influence in Cumberland and offered himself as Whig candidate for Carlisle in 1780. He won the seat, and was again

victorious at the election of 1784. He became an enthusiastic admirer of Charles James Fox, and a relentless enemy of the Court party. He incurred the anger of George III when at a Whig dinner in 1789 he gave the oastt: "Our Sovereign's health—the Majesty of the People."

For this offence he lost the command of the West Riding of Yorkshire regiment of militia, and was deprived of his Lord-Lieutenancy. He remained a Whig to the end, despite the persuasions of the Regent who offered him the Garter as a reward for changing his principles.

Richardson, Wrasell and Angelo have much in their memoirs unflattering to the "Jockey." Richardson describes him as dirty-looking and coarse of person. He could never, when sober, be induced to wash himself, and very rarely changed his linen. But as he was very drunk at least once a day and unable to offer resistance, his servants took advantage of these occasions to scrub him well with soap and water.

While still in his teens he often joined his father at dinner at the Thatched House in St. James's Street. Here among a crowd of seasoned toppers this beardless boy drank the company under the table, and then went to the Beefsteak Club, where he amazed the members by his capacity for heavy drinking.

The "Jockey" of Norfolk's career as a sensualist earned him an unenviable notoriety, even in that day of lax morals. He had innumerable *affaires* with women, and a host of illegitimate children. In Angelo's "Reminiscences" we are told that "the Duke had an extensive and increasing list of annuities to pay to women of various grades as the wages of their shame. It was said that they were paid quarterly at a certain

banker's, the cheques being drawn payable on the same day to all the parties. The Duke used to sit in a back parlour to have a peep at his old acquaintances, the name of whom as each applied he knew, as a clerk was appointed to bring the cheque as presented for the Duke's inspection. There he would make his comments to a confidential person at his elbow. Of one he would say, "I'faith, she looks as young as twenty years ago!" Of another, "What a dowdy!" Occasionally, however, a feeling of compunction, or perhaps of caprice, would seize him, when he would desire the party to step in, and there after inquiring of their welfare, he would sometimes entertain them with a gratuitous lecture on morality."

Another voluptuary of the period was "Red Herring" Yarmouth, of whom more will be heard in later chapters as one of the Prince's supporters and agents. His father was the second Marquis of Hertford, his mother the mistress of his friend and patron the Prince of Wales.

Few men have left behind them a more unsavoury reputation. While Lady Hertford ruled the Regent, her son enjoyed some measure of political influence. He showed righteous zeal in helping the Prince to hound the Princess Caroline out of London society. But when the Regent attempted familiarities with his own wife, Yarmouth thrashed him so soundly that he was unable to leave his bed for a week.

From this meritorious action it might be assumed that Lord Yarmouth had some respect for the sanctity of the marriage tie. But this was far from being so. His *affaires* with other women caused so much scandal that his wife was compelled to leave him. Hariette Wilson, the famous courtesan, said of him that he

thought of nothing but his own desires and lived the life of a voluptuary.

John Mills, himself a man of fashion and no Puritan, was even more emphatic, and wrote him down as "the debauched sensualist, the heartless roué, who never evinced a latent spark of virtue among his glaring vices." In 1822, Yarmouth succeeded to the Marquisate and a rent-roll of £80,000. Part of his income he devoted to buying votes in Parliament to gain political influence. This he succeeded in doing, and so for some years George IV and his ministers found him a force to be reckoned with.

## CHAPTER VI

### STATESMEN AND NOTABILITIES

WE turn with relief from the Bucks and Dandies to men of a different mould—the statesmen and politicians, soldiers and sailors, lawyers and men of letters, whose names add distinction to the age in which they lived.

The French Revolution had a more profound influence on English affairs than any event in the later years of the eighteenth century. It profoundly affected the policy of the British Government, brought about a new alignment of parties, and embittered political controversy to an almost incredible degree. The storming of the Bastille which Charles James Fox hailed as the death-knell of tyranny scattered the Whig party into impotent factions, and barred it from office for a generation.

But though Pitt had little to fear from the Opposition in Parliament, his shoulders were now weighted with a heavier load of responsibilities. Agitators in this country who had long clamoured for parliamentary reform, saw in the downfall of the French monarchy and the establishment of the Convention the dawn of a new day for oppressed peoples. The American colonists had made good their claim that taxation and representation should go together. The French peasant had thrown off his shackles. Now it was the turn of England. Nor was this agitation



confined to an obscure mob of revolutionaries. A number of the great nobles headed this new reform movement, among them the Dukes of Richmond and Norfolk, Lord Lansdown and Lord Stanhope. The poet Wordsworth had visions of a regenerated world, and for a time preached the gospel of the new faith, while clear-headed scientists like Dr. Priestley advocated it with rare polemical skill in the Press. The Radical group in the House of Commons never wearied of proclaiming the new doctrines, and like the extremists of the French Convention were known as the "Mountain." The Revolution Society, formed in London to commemorate the taking of the Bastille, even went so far as to correspond with the leaders of the Revolution in France, and to promise them material assistance.

It was Edmund Burke, one of the leaders of the Whig party, who undertook the task of defending the Constitution and attacking the new revolutionary movement. His *Reflections on the French Revolution* and the *Appeal from the new to the old Whigs*, are masterpieces of rhetorical English prose. As a famous writer has said, "A voice like the Apocalypse sounded over England, and was echoed in all the Courts of Europe." These and other writings of Burke became the text-books of the constitutional party. George III in his jerky way said of the "Reflections" that it was a good book, a very good book, and one that every gentleman ought to read, and Pitt in the House of Commons expressed his gratitude to Burke for his manly struggle against French principles, and asserted that his zeal and eloquence in such a cause entitled him to the gratitude of his fellow-subjects.

Then followed the dramatic scene in the House of



*W. T. Mansell, Photo*

CHARLES JAMES FOX



Commons when Fox seconded a vote of censure on Burke for his comments on affairs in France. Fox and Burke had been close personal friends for twenty-two years. Burke was deeply moved by Fox's speech on this occasion. Rising at the end of it, he complained of being personally attacked from a quarter where he least expected it and added, "At my time of life it is obviously indiscreet to provoke enemies or to lose friends," as he could not hope for the opportunities to acquire others, yet if his steady adherence to the British Constitution placed him in such a dilemma, he would risk all, and, as public duty and prudence taught him, with his last breath exclaim, "Fly from the French Constitution."

Here Fox called out excitedly, "There is no loss of friendship." But Burke shook his head and said, "I regret to say there is. I know the value of my line of conduct. I have indeed made a great sacrifice. I have done my duty though I have lost my friend."

Fox could not bear such a severance. With tears rolling down his cheeks he appealed to his "old and revered friend"—to the memory of their old attachment—their inalienable friendship, as dear and binding as the ties of nature between father and son.

But Burke was immovable, and though on subsequent occasions Fox attempted to bring about a reconciliation, Burke never responded and they never met again as friends.

Before the execution of the King and Queen of France, the parties for and against the Revolution in this country were about equal in number and influence. But this grim event caused a remarkable outburst of public feeling. Everyone wore mourning. For some

days the theatres and other places of public amusement were closed, and a howl of indignation went up against the perpetrators of these outrages. For a time the English revolutionaries were silent and abashed, and their numbers became fewer. Press and Pulpit shrieked for war, and in Parliament the Government was bombarded with demands that Britain should no longer maintain diplomatic relations with this race of regicides.

Pitt bowed to the storm. Chauvelin, the French representative in London, was handed his papers, and the Government began to prepare for the war that now seemed inevitable.

In January 1793 France declared war against England, and so began the conflict that was to last twenty-two years, and bring forth a military leader more daring and unscrupulous than had ever before menaced the peace of Europe.

The war radically changed Pitt's policy. The Parliamentary and commercial reforms he had long contemplated, and with which but for the French Revolution his name might have been identified, were now shelved indefinitely. The rest of his short life was devoted to fighting enemies abroad and disaffection at home. By friends he was regarded as the embodiment of authority, by enemies as the foe of Liberty. So bitter was political rancour that for the first time in English history a considerable section of the community openly sympathized with France, and rejoiced in her victories. As year followed year without cessation of hostilities, the National Debt mounted higher and higher, taxation became an intolerable burden and the export trade declined. Popular discontent increased. The populace in the

large towns suffered incredible hardships, while in Lancashire and Yorkshire they were almost driven to the point of open revolt. Only the severest measure of coercion saved the country from civil war. Government spies were everywhere and much of the time of the Courts was taken up with trials for high treason and sedition. In the eyes of the Whigs, Buonoparte was looked upon as a champion of liberty, while Pitt was the chief of the tyrants of whom the King's son, the Duke of Sussex, and other revolutionaries sang when at public dinners they roared that famous chorus :

“ Fall, tyrants, fall !  
 These are the days of liberty.  
 Fall, tyrants, fall ! ”

Cold, haughty and reserved, Pitt was the embodiment of officialdom. He lacked the geniality and ready sympathy of Fox, who had a host of friends and admirers. But he had a high sense of duty ; and a courage that sustained him through the darkest days of England's tribulations. To many of his followers in the House of Commons, who did not know him personally, he seemed a superman, exempt from the ordinary virtues and feelings of humanity, who worked ceaselessly and untiringly in the public interest. Yet he was very human, the most devoted and chivalrous of friends, and an enemy who neither asked nor gave quarter. He despised the Prince of Wales ; had nothing but contempt for Chancellor Thurlow, yet the speech of his political enemy Sheridan at the trial of Warren Hastings roused him to enthusiasm and he hailed it as the greatest oration ever made in either ancient or modern times. For Wellington and Nelson he had the

deepest respect and admiration, and Canning, his favourite pupil, he loved as his own son.

Before he left London for the last time, Lord Nelson went to take leave of the great statesman. Asked afterwards how he had been received, the Admiral said he had every reason to be gratified. As regards the French fleet at Cadiz, Pitt asked what force would be necessary to ensure a victory over it. Nelson mentioned his opinion on that point, but said that his object was not merely to conquer, but to annihilate. Pitt then assured him that whatever force he held necessary for that object should, as far as possible, be sent out to him. "Then," said Nelson, telling the tale to his family, "Mr. Pitt paid me a compliment which I believe he would not have paid to a Prince of the Blood. When I rose to go he left the room with me and attended me to the carriage."

Of the Duke of Wellington, who played so important a part in the world's affairs, the letter-writers and diarists of the age have much to say, and for the most part they do him justice. His astonishing candour, his absolute honesty, and his absence of all pose are apparent in every story we read about him.

When it was decided to send an expedition to Burma, the Prime Minister asked Wellington who should lead the expedition.

"Send Lord Combermore," answered the Duke.

"But I have always heard that you thought Lord Combermore a fool."

"So he is a fool, and a damned fool, but he can take Rangoon."

To Creevey, who saw him the morning after Waterloo, he spoke freely about the battle. "It has been a damned serious business," he exclaimed. "It has

been a damned nice thing—the nearest run thing you ever saw in your life. Blücher got so damnably licked on Friday night, I could not find him on Saturday morning. By God, I don't think it would have been done if I had not been there.”

At that interview Creevey, who had been anything but an admirer of Wellington, began to understand that here was a man not cast in the common mould.

To Croker, Wellington confided his opinion of Napoleon. “He was a shabby fellow. I was never a believer in him, and I always thought that in the long run we should overturn him. He never seemed at his ease, and even in the boldest things he did there was always a mixture of apprehension and meanness. He did not care about what was right or wrong, just or unjust, honourable or dishonourable. His whole life, civil, political and military, was a fraud.”

The Duke distrusted authors and journalists. He carefully explained to Mrs. Norton when she wished to dedicate a song to him that he never accepted such compliments, and that in his position as Chancellor of an ancient University “he had been much exposed to authors.”

In 1826, when Canning, whom he blindly hated, was appointed Prime Minister, the Duke resigned his seat in the Cabinet, and the command of the Army as well. For some years after Waterloo he had been a national idol. Now he had become that pitiful object—a man with a grievance. His friends pressed him to state his case in the newspapers. But he would have none of it. “I hate the whole tribe of news-writers.”

The Duke was a Tory of Tories and opposed Reform with an obstinacy that made him for a time



the most unpopular man in England. Yet, years later, when politicians at last understood that he was not of their self-seeking tribe, he won golden opinions from men of all parties, and the bitterest of Radicals were among his most fervent admirers. "That man's first object," wrote Brougham, "is to serve his country, with a sword if necessary—or with a pick-axe."

The ablest but least trusted of Pitt's ministers was Lord Chancellor Thurlow. No politician of his time tapped the political barometer so frequently or to such excellent purpose as this wily placeman. Of his cynical indifference to any interests but his own many stories are told.

When in 1788 Beaufay made his attempt to obtain the repeal of the Corporation and Test Act, a deputation waited upon Lord Chancellor Thurlow to obtain his support. The Chancellor listened very civilly to the spokesman of the deputation, and then said, "Gentlemen, I'm against you, by God. I am for the Established Church, damn me! Not that I have any more regard for the Established Church than for any other Church, but because it is established. And if you can get your damned religion established, I'll be for that too!"

It was an age of great men. When the Prince of Wales was a little boy, Dr. Johnson had invaded his school-room at Windsor and talked to him about his studies. Among his friends in later years were Sheridan and Burke, while among his contemporaries were Gibbon, the historian, scientists and inventors like Sir Humphry Davy, Dr. Priestley and George Stephenson and great poets like Wordsworth and Coleridge. To these were added in the early years of the nineteenth century Byron, Rogers, Keats, Shelley, and Southey. States-

men like Castlereagh and Canning, and great lawyers like Mansfield and Erskine were among the representative men of that period, but of those who towered above their fellows, and claimed the faith and allegiance of succeeding generations, there are two deserving of especial mention,—Sir Walter Scott and Jane Austen.

The Regent had long been an admirer of Sir Walter's poetry, but it was not till 1822, when he had been King for two years, that he first met the famous author on his native heath. The occasion was the King's visit to Scotland. When his vessel arrived in Leith Roads, Sir Walter was one of the first to welcome him. As soon as his arrival was announced the King cried, "The man in Scotland I most wished to see. Let him come up."

The King desired him to take a glass of cherry brandy, and handed it to Sir Walter himself. When he had drunk the brandy, Sir Walter asked, as a great favour, if he might keep the glass from which he had drunk.

But before this Sir Walter had been many times a favoured visitor at Carlton House when he came to town. "Let me know," said the Regent in 1815, "when he comes and I'll get up a snug little dinner that will suit him." Croker's ever-ready enthusiasm was raised to fever-pitch on one of these occasions. "The Prince and Scott were the two most brilliant story-tellers in their several ways I have ever happened to meet. Both exerted themselves and I could not say which had shone the most. The Regent was enchanted with Scott, and Scott with him. Afterwards Scott told stories of Scottish judges, which the Regent capped with some, of his own judges."

At midnight the Prince called for a bumper to the author of *Waverley*. But Scott, who was unwilling to disclose the secret, was not to be drawn, and he pawkily replied that the author should hear of the compliment. Not to be outdone, the Prince next drank to the author of *Marmion*, and, turning to Scott, said with a smile, "Now, Walter, my man, I have checkmated you for once." Afterwards the Regent presented Sir Walter with a splendid snuff-box.

Sir Walter Scott was a great gentleman, generous and chivalrous. The ancient loyalties to Church and King to him were sacred articles of his creed. A fervid romantic, the divinity that hedges princes was an aura that hid from his vision shortcomings apparent to men cast in more prosaic mould. It is true also that he saw the King on festive occasions only when his charm of manner and social gifts exercised their fullest influence, but it must also be remembered that he was highly gifted with imaginative insight and skilled in reading the human heart. His opinion, therefore, that differs from other judgments recorded in these pages deserves consideration.

He said: "He was the first gentleman I had seen, certainly the first English gentleman of his day. As to his abilities, as distinct from his charming manners, how could anyone form a fair judgment of that man who introduced what subject he chose, discussed it just as long as he chose, and dismissed it when he chose?"

One enthusiasm the Regent and Sir Walter Scott had in common—their admiration of the works of Jane Austen. The Janeites, as Mr. Kipling calls them, were then but a small and select band. Amid the tumultuous excitement aroused by Byron's poems and



*W. F. Mansell, Photo*

WILLIAM PITT



the Waverley novels, Miss Austen's comedies of rural domestic life caused little stir. Yet from the beginning of her literary career she had her devotees, and the first of these was the Prince Regent. No better tribute could be paid to his discernment. So much did he enjoy reading *Mansfield Park*, that he asked the author to dedicate her next book to him. As *Emma* was the next and, in the opinion of many, the greatest of her novels, it was dedicated in the following terms :

“To His Royal Highness, the Prince Regent, this work is by His Royal Highness's permission, most respectfully dedicated by His Royal Highness's Dutiful and Obedient Humble Servant, the Author.”

Writing on behalf of the Regent, his librarian, Mr. Clarke, next suggested to Miss Austen the theme of a new story. “And I also, dear Madam,” he wrote in 1815, “wish to be allowed to ask you to dedicate in some future work the habits of life and character and enthusiasm of a clergyman who should pass his time between the Metropolis and the country, who should be something like Beattie's Minstrel, ‘silent when glad, affectionate tho' shy, and now he laughed aloud yet none knew why.’ Neither Goldsmith nor La Fontaine in his *Tableau de Famille* have in my mind quite delineated an English clergyman—at least of the present day—fond of and entirely engaged in literature, no man's enemy but his own. Pray, dear Madam, think of these things.”

Miss Austen, as a dutiful subject, gave the matter consideration, and the result of her meditations was as follows :

“I am quite honoured by your thinking me capable of drawing such a clergyman as you gave the sketch

of in your note of November 16th. But I assure you I am *not*. The comic part of the character I might be equal to, but not the good, the enthusiastic, the literary. Such a man's conversation must at times be on subjects of science and philosophy, of which I know nothing ; or at least be occasionally abundant in quotations and allusions which a woman who, like me, knows only her mother tongue, and has read little in that, would be totally without the power of giving. A classical education, or at any rate a very extensive acquaintance with English literature, ancient and modern, appears to me quite indispensable for the person who would do any justice to your clergyman ; and I think I may boast myself to be, with all possible vanity, the most unlearned and uninformed female who ever dared to be an authoress."

Despite her objections to Mr. Clarke's suggestion, Miss Austen *did* prepare the outline of a long novel concerning the adventures of a clergyman and his daughter. But this she never expanded into a story, and at the time it was only seen by her intimate friends.

But Mr. Clarke, in no way discouraged by the reception of his earlier suggestions, was still desirous of being helpful. In thanking Miss Austen for *Emma* on behalf of the Prince Regent, he reminded her that Prince Leopold, betrothed to the Regent's daughter, would in the fullness of time be Prince Consort to the future Queen of England. As chaplain to the young Prince he suggested that a romance illustrating the history of the House of Coburg would be of the greatest interest and value to English readers.

But again Miss Austen shook her head. She wrote : "You are very kind in your hints as to the sort of composition which might recommend me at present,

and I am fully sensible that an historical romance founded on the House of Saxe-Coburg might be much more to the purpose of profit or popularity than such pictures of domestic life in country villages as I deal in. But I could no more write a romance than an epic poem. I could not sit seriously down to write a serious romance under any other motive than to save my life ; and if it were indispensable for me to keep it up, and never relax into laughing at myself or at other people, I am sure I should be hung before I had finished the first chapter. No, I must keep to my own style and go on in my own way ; and though I may never succeed again in that, I am convinced that I should totally fail in any other."

With such invincible modesty the Regent's librarian found it impossible to cope, and he offered no further suggestions.



## CHAPTER VII

### SOCIAL CONDITIONS : DUELLING

**W**E may have, as the younger generation are so fond of telling us, left the political and social landmarks of the later Victorians miles and miles behind, but the distance we have travelled since the days of our great-grandfathers is amazing and startling.

In nothing is this difference more apparent than in the treatment of lunatics, paupers and criminals. Just a century ago, in the closing year of George IV's reign, Lord Shaftesbury in the course of his investigations discovered to his horror that the inmates of Bedlam were chained to their straw beds, and that every week-end, from Saturday until Monday, they were left entirely without attendance or supervision, and with only bread and water within their reach. And as if this were not enough the poor creatures in this and other asylums were made a raree-show of "for the entertainment and amusement of idle sightseers, who derived great satisfaction from these and similar spectacles."

The records of the time show that the inmates of Poor Law institutions suffered intolerable hardships, and were treated with an indifference and brutality that in later years roused the righteous anger of Charles Dickens and Thomas Carlyle.

Our penal code was appalling. In 1770 there were

one hundred and sixty capital offences on the Statute Book, but in the early years of the nineteenth century, when Pitt was fighting desperately to maintain order at home, this number was greatly increased. Romilly's Bill for abolishing the death-penalty for any crime lighter than stealing five shillings was strenuously opposed by Lord Ellenborough, who contended that the criminal class did not look upon transportation as a punishment, but regarded it rather as "a summer airing by an easy migration to a milder climate." A girl of twenty-two was hanged for receiving a piece of cloth from the man who had stolen it. A few years earlier a woman was charged and convicted for coining and was burnt at the stake.

But while poor people were hanged and transported for relatively trivial offences, men who had killed others in duels, though legally guilty of murder, escaped with trivial punishments. Even in 1839, as Sir Arthur Quiller Couch reminds us in his *Studies in Literature*, one of the Judges of Assize, Lord Denman, sentenced a boy of thirteen at Launceston to penal servitude for life for stealing three gallons of potatoes, while the late G. E. Russell mentions the case of a woman who died in the County Jail at Exeter after forty-five years' imprisonment for a debt of £19.

When, in 1820, the Cato Street conspirators, who had planned the murder of Cabinet Ministers, were condemned to death, the boys of Westminster School were given a holiday so that their young minds might be led to consider the awful consequences of treason.

These men were hanged in front of Newgate Jail. Lord de Ros's description of this affair is illuminating: "The executioner and his assistant cut down one of

the corpses from the gallows, and placed it in the coffin, but with the head hanging over on the block. The man with the knife instantly severed the head from the body, and the executioner, receiving it in his hands, held it up, saying in a loud voice, 'This is the head of a traitor.' He then dropped it into the coffin, which being removed another was brought forward, and they proceeded to cut down the next body and to go through the same ghastly operation. It was observed that the mob, which was very large, gazed in silence at the hanging of the conspirators, and showed not the least sympathy, but when each head was cut off and held up, a loud and deep groan of horror burst from all sides, which was not soon forgotten by those who heard it."

Extraordinary virulence was shown in the election contests of the period. Party feeling ran dangerously high, and politicians stooped to shameless practices to gain victory for their own parties; and instead of receiving a writ from an opponent as in these days, a candidate had often to face his opponent with a pistol in the grey light of early morning. These election fights were similar to Dickens's Eatenswill with savagery added to give zest to the affair. Thus at a Windsor election a mob was hired to throw Lord Mornington over Windsor Bridge. But Mornington had a stronger mob at his back and the plot was frustrated. Greville in his *Diary* professes himself gravely shocked at the behaviour of the mob at the election in Westminster.

According to the same authority, an election in Liverpool cost nearly £100,000 to the two parties and is said to have exhibited a scene of bribery and corruption perfectly unparalleled; no concealment or

even semblance of decency was observed, and single votes fetched from £15 to £100 apiece.

Such expenditure seems incredible, but even more significant as an indication of political morality is the fact that this debauchery of the electorate aroused neither comment nor surprise.

Elections were the cause of more duels than any other public events. We have it on authority that they seldom originated at horse-races, cock-fights or hunts. People then had pleasure in view, and something else to do than to quarrel. But at elections, almost every man, without any assignable reason, immediately became a violent partizan, and frequently a dangerous enemy to somebody else, and gentlemen were often shot before they knew what they had been fighting about. In 1825 Mr. Lyttleton declared in the House of Commons amid cheers and laughter that the candidate who would dare to canvass leaseholders in Ireland must be prepared to answer for his conduct at the pistol's point, and that the only unsettled point on this subject in the Irish Courts of Honour was whether such an offending candidate was not bound to receive his opponent's fire without returning it.

Though not quite as common as fifty years before, duelling in the first twenty years of the last century was still regarded as the most fitting method of settling personal quarrels. The duel of the Duke of York with Colonel Lennox and the Duke of Wellington's affair with Lord Winchelsea show that men in the highest positions conformed to the custom. As Wellington remarked when some friends remonstrated with him for risking his life in such a trumpery quarrel, "It was a matter of personal honour and

feeling, and that being a soldier, I might perhaps be more sensitive than an individual of a different class in society, and therefore considered the course pursued to be unavoidable." Fortunately the duels mentioned, like those between Pitt and Turney, and Canning and Castlereagh, were bloodless, but these were exceptional. A London editor writing on the subject stated that in three issues of his journal nine fatal meetings were reported, and added that "duels have become so common that we cease almost to hear of their immediate source." At the universities and even in the public schools many disputes were settled with sword or pistol, and there are many records of duels that ended fatally. Near Mark's Church, Dublin, two boys of sixteen named Wetherall and Moran fought a duel in which one was killed and the other wounded. Two boys of the same age who had been expelled from Yale College fought with rifles at a distance of twenty paces. They were encouraged by their parents, one of whom witnessed the death of his son.

Even more extraordinary were the fighting parsons. Many of these acquired reputations as fire-eaters, and varied the duties of their parishes with trips to the French coast, where they settled affairs of honour.

One of the most noted of these clerical duellists was Parson Bate, rector of North Farnbridge, afterwards appointed to a Canonry at Ely. He assumed the name of Dudley on acquiring an estate bequeathed to him, and in 1813 became a baronet.

Bate gained considerable notoriety as a bruiser and duellist, and was always ready for a fight either with fists or sword. In addition to his parochial work he also did journalistic work on the *Morning Post*. On

one occasion he fought a duel in a room at the Adelphi Hotel with an Army officer, in which he wounded his antagonist. But it was what he himself described as "The Vauxhall Affray" that made him one of the notabilities of his day and generation. Bate himself published a pamphlet giving his version of this affair.

According to a more impartial account, Bate, Mrs. Hartley the actress, Mr. Colman and Mr. Tatham were strolling together one evening in Vauxhall Gardens when they were affronted by several gentlemen who endeavoured to stare the lady out of countenance, with that kind of *petit maître* audacity which no language but the modern French can possibly describe. The Parson decided to put a stop to this and seated himself between the lady and these offenders; at the same time loudly declaring that he would put a stop to any further insults of that kind. As Mrs. Hartley did not wish to figure in a scene she got up from the seat and walked away. Bate rose to follow her, but before walking off turned to the men beside him and told them they were four impertinent puppies.

This was resented by a Captain Crofts who, although not one of the parties addressed, took up the quarrel and continued to follow and molest the reverend gentleman, until at last Bate became exasperated, and turning round on his tormentors exclaimed, "Say three more impertinent words to me, and I will wring the nose off your face."

Captain Crofts retorted by demanding his name and address, which were at once furnished. After sauntering about the Gardens for an hour Bate and his party again encountered Crofts and his friends, who had now been joined by the Hon. Mr. Lyttleton, Captain Fitzgerald and others. Fitzgerald now took

up the cudgels for his friends, and his advocacy took the form of personal abuse. Discovering that Bate was a parson, he exercised a little cheap wit upon him, and endeavoured to hold him up to ridicule.

Bate retorted in kind, by commenting freely on Fitzgerald's personal appearance—"his hat and feathers, dress, miniature picture pendant at his snow-white bosom."

Next morning Bate's servant brought him the following flattering letter :

" Sir,

Whereas you insulted me last night in a manner not to be suffered by a man, much less by a gentleman, I am determined to have satisfaction ; and as boxing is the exercise you seem to pride yourself upon, and the only one that I apprehend you will partake of with me, this is to give you notice that if you will appoint your time and place, I will meet you upon your own terms ; and if you do refuse to give me the satisfaction I require, I will hunt you up and down London until I find you, and will then pull your nose, spit in your face, and pull your black coat off your back.

A. CROFTS.

To the Rev. Mr. Bate, M.A."

But for all his warlike epistle, Captain Crofts was only a blusterer and had no wish to risk an encounter with Bate. So he or his friends elaborated a neat little plot, which if it developed as they hoped and believed would save Croft's own skin, and humiliate Bate.

The Parson promptly replied to Crofts' letter appointing the Turk's Head Tavern as a meeting-

place. Here he was joined at the appointed time by Captain Crofts and the Hon. Mr. Lyttleton, who agreed after a long discussion, conducted on both sides with punctilious politeness, that the differences should be settled with pistols that same afternoon in Richmond Park.

Just as the parties were about to leave the room, Fitzgerald burst into the room and, confronting Bate, loudly demanded satisfaction in the name of his friend Captain Miles, who was outside in the coffee-room, "waiting with the utmost impatience."

Bate explained that he would be happy to accommodate Captain Miles,—whoever he might be,—but that nothing could be done until his duel with Captain Crofts had been settled. But Fitzgerald would hear of no delay and insolently regarded the Parson's explanation as an excuse.

After discussion, formal concessions were made on both sides, and it was arranged that the duel with Crofts should be declared off,—Captain Crofts admitting "that Mrs. Hartley having been ungenteelly treated, Mr. Bate acted with great spirit and propriety in defending her."

Bate then tendered the following carefully worded apology—"That point being granted I beg Mr. Crofts' pardon for any unguarded expression which arose from a misunderstanding on both sides."

Bate was now free to deal with the mysterious Captain Miles, who was now invited to step into the room.

This so-called Captain, who, as it subsequently transpired, was no other than Fitzgerald's footman and a professional bruiser, stated that he had taken part in the dispute at Vauxhall the night before, and that Bate had insulted him.



Bate declared that this was a mistake, as he had never seen the man before. But as Miles would listen to no explanation Bate agreed to a bare-knuckle fight with him and for this purpose suggested an immediate adjournment to the Spread Eagle Tavern.

This was exactly what Crofts and Fitzgerald wished to arrange. Miles was known to them as a dour and skilful prize-fighter, and as he was a man of very powerful build, and a hard hitter, they believed that the Parson was in for a sound thrashing.

The rest of the story can be told in the Parson's own words :

"Not being able to pacify him with words, we stripped, and previous to the onset I addressed Mr. Lyttleton to testify how disagreeable it was to me, and if there could be a propriety in such an exercise which I much doubted, begged that here it might be observed on both sides. These proper preliminaries being settled, the Captain received in about fifteen minutes the satisfaction he required, not being able to discern a single ray of light by which to find his way home."

As Angelo, the Parson's friend, remarks : "Miles was taken away almost senseless in a hackney coach."

The Fitzgerald who figures in this story was himself a noted duellist, and on one occasion fought a duel in the open street of a market town in Ireland, in the presence of a great crowd of spectators. When he was introduced to the King of France by the British Ambassador, His Majesty was informed that the Irishman had fought twenty-six fatal duels.

"Twenty-six fatal duels?" exclaimed the King. "The man must be a modern bluebeard."

Fitzgerald's stormy life ended ignominiously. He was hanged for murder.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE BRIDE

**I**T was said of the Prince of Wales in later years by one of his intimates, that he hated only three people in the world,—his father, his wife, and his daughter.

His dislikes had a much wider range, but there can be little doubt that these three were his particular aversions. Of this enmity his wife Caroline had the lion's share.

It is on record that when the news of Napoleon's death reached the Royal Household in the spring of 1821, one of his friends remarked to the King, "Your Majesty's greatest enemy is dead." The King heaved a sigh of relief and exclaimed, "Thank God she is dead."

The idea of a Royal marriage was distasteful to the Prince of Wales, and he was not inclined to add one more coil to the entanglement of his love affairs. He was, as Sheridan said, "too much of a lady's man ever to be the man of any lady," but so far as it was possible to be faithful to anyone, he was true to Mrs. Fitzherbert.

His affair with her had been the great passion of his life, and though he was now infatuated with Lady Jersey, he was again to return to the woman he had secretly married years before.

But his own follies and extravagance, as much as

the advice of his friends, forced him to take the step he so much feared and disliked. In spite of the sale of bonds he was again involved in a hopeless morass of debt, and his only resource was to apply to the King for assistance. He consulted his friend Lord Malmesbury in this matter and told him "that several executions had been in his house,—Lord Rawdon had saved him from one,—that his debts amounted to three hundred and seventy thousand pounds."

But King and Parliament had already twice paid the Prince's debts. The King was unwilling to come to his aid again, and Pitt shook his head dubiously.

Then the Prince once more made his familiar theatrical gesture, closed Carlton House, stopped the building operations, sold many of his horses, and dismissed a troop of servants.

But these spasmodic outbreaks of economy had occurred too often to make any impression on His Majesty, who was resolved that no help would be given until the Prince changed his mode of life. At last the King had his way, for in August 1794 he wrote from Weymouth: "I have this morning seen the Prince of Wales, who has acquainted me with his having broken off all connection with Mrs. Fitzherbert and his desire of entering into a more creditable line of life by marrying; expressing at the same time that his wish is that my niece, the Princess of Brunswick, may be the person. Undoubtedly she is the person who naturally must be most agreeable to me. I expressed my approbation of the idea, provided his plan was to lead a life that would make him appear respectable, and consequently render the Princess happy. He assured me that he perfectly coincided with me in opinion."

But the Prince's representations were insincere and his good resolutions only average specimens of the material that paves the way to the pit.

For he was, as already said, in the toils of Lady Jersey, the daughter of the Bishop of Raphoe, who many years before had been known as the beautiful Miss Twysden. The Countess was a lady of mature charms and the mother of a large family. She had still some claims to beauty, and according to those who knew her well, endowed with fascination and charm.

For a time Mrs. Fitzherbert was dismissed without ceremony, and the Prince succumbed to the wiles of the new favourite.

The preliminaries having been settled to the satisfaction of the King and his eldest son, Lord Malmesbury, who was in charge of an important mission in Germany, received instructions from George III to proceed to the Court of Brunswick. Here he was to ask, on behalf of the Prince, for the hand of the Princess Caroline in marriage. In the event of this proposal being favourably received he was also instructed to draw up and sign the marriage treaty, act as the Prince's proxy at the ceremony, and bring the Princess to England. The envoy, if we are to credit his own account of the business, seems to have discharged his duties with conscientious regard for the interests of all the parties concerned. The curious may learn the full particulars of these interesting negotiations in the Diaries and Correspondence that still perpetuate his fame and reputation.

Rigid etiquette was observed at the Court of Brunswick. The English diplomatist was received with honours and installed at the Palace with guards and servants to do his bidding. The Duke, a man of

polished manners, received him graciously while the Duchess—George III's sister—was “all good nature.”

But the Duke had his misgivings about his daughter Caroline, who was “much embarrassed” when Lord Malmesbury was presented.

Caroline was now in her twenty-eighth year ; but as one of the German Court ladies ill-naturedly remarked to the envoy, “old as she was her education was not yet completed.” She could play a little on the harpsichord, and speak and read English, Italian and French indifferently well. These, however, were her sole accomplishments.

Many escapades of her early days are recorded that indicate a flighty and ill-balanced character. When she was sixteen years of age she was forbidden to attend a Court Ball. The ball had scarcely begun when her parents received an urgent summons to return home as the Princess was very ill. When they returned they found her in bed screaming. “Please send for a doctor,” she said, “I am in labour.” When the doctor arrived, Caroline laughed, wiped some rouge from her face, and admitted that the whole was a trick. “Now,” she exclaimed, “will you keep me from the ball another time ? ”

Lord Malmesbury seems to have felt a compassionate interest in this friendless little Princess, and in the few weeks that he spent at the Court of Brunswick he gave her an intensive course of training for the exalted position to which she was now called. He found her attractive and noted as her good points a pretty face, good hands, fair hair, and shapely bust. But for a woman of her age she was raw and inexperienced ; totally devoid of dignity, and slovenly in dress and person. This he realized would never suit a man

so fastidious in dress and deportment as the Prince of Wales. It was a delicate subject to discuss with a young lady, and especially a Princess, but as she was in the habit of boasting that she took less time over her toilette than any lady of the Court, he found opportunities for admonishing her, and advised her to spare no pains in making herself as attractive and presentable as possible. He also spoke to a lady of the Court on the matter, and urged her to suggest to the Princess that a tooth-brush was an indispensable part of a lady's equipment, and that a more liberal use of soap and water was desirable.

After an acquaintance of six days, Malmesbury noted that the "Princess Caroline improves on acquaintance, is gay and cheerful with good sense," but he perceived all too clearly that she was obviously unfitted for the station in life to which fate, in the person of the King of England, had called her.

It is impossible for those who have studied her life-story not to feel sympathy and pity for the Princess. She had known nothing of the pleasures that children in a less exalted station enjoy. Her girlhood was spent in the dullest and most dissolute Court in Europe. Her father the Duke was a notorious libertine, and his principal mistress Mlle de Hertzfeldt had a recognized position in the Royal circle. Caroline's mother had also rudimentary notions of morality and found lovers in plenty to console her for her husband's infidelities. Busied with their own pleasures, the parents had little time or inclination to superintend the education of their daughter, and she was left to the tender mercies of governesses. These subjected the girl to an iron discipline, the only effect of which was to exasperate and make her unhappy. Until she was grown up,

Caroline was not allowed to look out of a window. Only on set occasions was she granted the privilege of dining with her mother, or appearing in company. Under this regime of petty restrictions she became wilful, difficult to control, and embarrassingly outspoken. Sir John T. Stanley who fell in love with the young girl writes enthusiastically of her as "the lively, pretty Caroline, the girl my eyes had so often rested on, with light and powdered hair hanging in curls on her neck, the lips from which only sweet words seemed as if they could flow, with looks animated and always simply and modestly dressed."

From these rhapsodies we may gather that the Princess was passably good-looking, and she was endowed with another quality which in after years was to prove more of a bane than a blessing,—a mordant wit which she loved to exercise on those she disliked. Once when she was asked to define time and space she replied, "You can see space in the mouth of Frau B., and age in her face." Some of her shafts in later years helped to complete the estrangement between herself and her husband, who regarded it as an act of impiety to be jocular at his expense.

Another notable trait in her character was her fondness for children, and she would go out of her way to show kindness to any tiny tots that she discovered in the neighbourhood of her home. This quality also in the years to come was the cause of unhappiness and misunderstanding.

Preparations for the wedding were hurried forward. The marriage treaty was drawn up, and on December the 3rd the State carriages took the envoy to Court to demand formally the Princess's hand in marriage. This momentous event was followed by State dinners,

the interchange of valuable but useless presents, much whist playing, and general congratulations. Finally came the ordeal of signing the marriage contract, and from that time onwards Caroline was known as the Princess of Wales.

But nearly four months elapsed before it was possible to bring the bride to England. France was at war with this country, and the troops of the new Republic had invaded Holland. It was impossible to travel by the ordinary land route which would subsequently entail only a short sea-crossing. So it was decided to wait until the British fleet arrived at the port of Stade.

Meanwhile letters received from England made the Duke uneasy about his daughter's future. He was under no illusions about the Prince of Wales, and understood that if he liked the Princess "too well or too little," difficulties would arise. He tried to make up for his previous neglect by plaguing her with admonition and advice. He also sought out Malmesbury and implored him to watch over his daughter. Mlle de Hertzfeldt, the Duke's mistress, also talked to the English envoy on the subject. She regretted that Caroline was utterly lacking in tact, and "of a temper easily wrought on." Malmesbury responded to these urgings by pointing out to Caroline the difficulties of her new position, and giving her such advice as the occasion prompted.

All this the young bride bore with patience and good temper, even if she did not prove a very apt pupil. Her mentor seems to have been satisfied with her behaviour, for he writes almost with enthusiasm about "her natural ease, her good-humour and affability." Still, Malmesbury knew the Prince, and



he had serious misgivings as to the outcome of the union. Speaking of the Princess he says—"with a steady man she would do vastly well, but with one of a different description there are grave risks."

The Princess herself seems to have regarded the future with equanimity. She suffered none of the qualms that distressed her father and mother. She knew that the Prince had not wished to marry her, for he had told her so in a letter. She knew also the Queen Charlotte hated her mother, and was scarcely likely to take the daughter to her heart. What she hoped to gain by the marriage is difficult to understand. She had no friends in England, save the King, and him she had never seen. Notwithstanding these drawbacks, which would have caused a person of more discretion to reflect, she took the irrevocable step without hesitation. Probably she thought, if she reflected at all, that the King's friendship would prove a tower of refuge; that in the event of any difference with the Prince, each could agree to go his or her own way, as her father and mother had done with apparently satisfactory results; and that whatever might occur in the future her status as Consort of the future King of England was one of the greatest in the world, and would greatly outweigh any disadvantages that might attach to the position. Besides, what could be worse than the life of a high-spirited girl in the Court of a petty German prince?

At last on April 1st, 1795, the Princess embarked on H.M.S. *Jupiter* at Stade, and three days later this man-of-war sailed up the Thames. A Royal Yacht was waiting at Gravesend which conveyed the Princess and her escort to Greenwich. From the populace the Princess received a hearty and spontaneous wel-

come. Harwich was decked with flags as the *Jupiter* passed that eastern port, and both shores of the Thames were lined with cheering crowds.

But there was no one to meet the Princess when she landed at Greenwich. She was conducted to the Hospital, but there she found no one to meet her. At last, after an hour's wait, two Royal coaches appeared in which were Lady Jersey, Mrs. Aston and Lord Claremont. Malmesbury saw in this escort a studied insult to the Princess. It seemed inconceivable to him that Queen Charlotte had sent Lady Jersey, the openly acknowledged mistress of her son, to act as escort to his wife. He further discovered that the delay in meeting the young bride was occasioned by this lady, who had not been ready at the time of starting. Her ladyship accentuated her rudeness by finding fault with the Princess's dress, and arraying her in another she had brought for the purpose.

George's reception of his bride was not cordial. It was not even courteous. The scene has been described by the conscientious Malmesbury who was the only spectator: "I introduced the Princess to him," he says. "She very properly, in consequence of my saying to her it was the right mode of procedure, attempted to kneel to him. He raised her (gracefully enough) and embraced her, said barely one word, turned round, retired to a distant part of the apartment, and calling me to him said, 'Harris, I am not well, pray get me a glass of brandy.' I said, 'Sir, had you not better have a glass of water?' Upon which he, much out of humour, said with an oath, 'No; I will go directly to the Queen,' and away he went."

The Princess was naturally amazed at this strange

reception. Turning to Malmesbury, who hurried forward to make excuses for the Prince, she exclaimed — “*Mon Dieu ! Est-ce que le Prince est toujours comme cela ? Je le trouve très gros et nullement aussi beau que son portrait.*”

Malmesbury explained the Prince was not himself, and that he was nervously excited by the ordeal of a first interview.

“His Royal Highness will be quite different to-night, when you meet him at dinner,” the envoy promised, as he hurried off to wait on the King.

“Is she good-humoured ?” asked the monarch when Malmesbury reported on his mission.

“I have never seen her otherwise, even under the most trying conditions,” replied Malmesbury warmly.

“I am glad of it,” remarked the King indifferently as he turned again to the State papers at his elbow.

Already the Prince had grossly insulted his bride by sending his mistress to meet her. He had treated her with extraordinary rudeness when she arrived at the Palace. But worse was to come. At a small dinner that evening the Prince again met his bride, but again Lady Jersey was present. What occurred we know from Caroline’s own account, and the painstaking Malmesbury’s Diary. “The first moment I saw my *futur* and Lady Jersey together I knew how it all was and I said to myself, ‘Oh, very well !’ I took my *partie*. One of the civil things His Royal Highness did just at first was to find fault with my shoes, and as I was very young and lively in those days I told him to make me a better pair and bring them to me. I brought letters from the princes and princesses to him from all the petty Courts, and I tossed them to

him and said, 'There! that's to prove I am not an impostor.' "

Malmesbury was perplexed and rather annoyed by the behaviour of the pupil he had so carefully schooled, at this dinner-party. The lessons of prudence he had taught were completely forgotten. Dignity was thrown to the winds, and the Prince was deeply hurt by his bride's flippant sarcasms at the expense of Lady Jersey.

What the envoy, so critical of his charge, failed to notice was that the Princess, bitterly hurt by the presence of Lady Jersey, masked the rankling wound under a mask of indifference and flippancy. What woman, however tactful and diplomatic, would have appeared at her best in an atmosphere so hostile?

After dinner the King and Queen with other members of the Royal Family came to meet the Princess, and she was formally presented. The Queen was chillingly polite, the King fatherly and affectionate.

On the 3rd of April, three days later, the marriage was performed at the Chapel Royal, St. James's, at eight o'clock in the evening. The Archbishop of Canterbury officiated. The bridegroom, according to Lady Maria Stuart, "looked like death during the ceremony as if he wanted to hide himself from the looks of the whole world." This is not surprising, for he had fortified himself for the occasion with copious draughts of brandy, and was so drunk that the Duke of Bedford could scarcely prevent him from falling down. Throughout the ceremony he was prompted by his father in the responses. Once while the ceremony was in progress he rose impatiently from his knees. The Archbishop stopped his recital,

and the King stepped forward and recalled his son's attention to the solemn service.

"The Prince spent the greatest part of his bridal-night," said his wife, "in the grate where he fell, and where I left him."

## CHAPTER IX

### THE SEPARATION

**I**F the Princess of Wales entertained any hopes of married bliss after her inauspicious wedding-day they were utterly quenched in the month that followed.

On the day after the wedding she and her husband returned to Windsor and then went on to the Prince's house at Kempshott. Among those in attendance on the Prince was Beau Brummell, then in the meridian of his splendour as King of the Dandies. Brummell, unlike his master, thought the Princess handsome and attractive, but he does not seem to have influenced any of the Prince's friends in her favour. The Prince showed himself utterly indifferent to his wife's welfare. Even if he bore her no affection, the fact that she was a stranger in a strange land, and without a friend to whom she could turn for consolation and advice, would have induced any husband with a spark of chivalrous feeling to show her consideration. Instead, he subjected her to every kind of annoyance, invited a troop of his boon companions to Kempshott "who were constantly drunk, and sleeping in boots on the sofas." The only other lady beside the Princess in this honeymoon party was the Prince's mistress, Lady Jersey.

The Princess bore this treatment with remarkable forbearance and patience, but it was obvious to on-lookers that the marriage would end in disaster.

"It is impossible," said Lord Malmesbury, who saw much that was hidden from the public eye, "to foresee or conceive any comfort from this connection in which I lament very much having taken any share, however passive it was."

Within three weeks of the wedding an informal separation took place between the couple, but they still appeared together in public, and the Prince introduced her to a few of his intimates, among them Sheridan. But she found no peace or comfort at Carlton House or at the Brighton Pavilion. Her husband had secured for Lady Jersey the appointment of Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess, who had thus to endure daily the society of the rival she detested, while the Prince's attitude to his wife grew day by day more hostile. A letter she wrote to a friend in Germany in December 1795 eloquently depicts her forlorn condition:

"I expect speedily to be the mother of an infant. I know not how I shall be able to support myself in the hour of solitude, but I trust to the benevolence of Heaven. The Queen seldom visits me and my sisters-in-law are equally attentive. Yet the English I admire, and when I appear in public nothing can be more flattering than the reception which I meet with. . . . Yet why do I tell you these things? I am surrounded with miserable and evil principles, and whatever I attempt is misrepresented here. The Countess of Jersey still continues here. I hate her, and I am confident that she does me no less. My husband is very partial to her, and so the rest you will be able to divine."

On January 7th, 1796, the Princess of Wales gave birth to a daughter. For a time the condition of the Princess was critical and the public was edified with

the intelligence that "the agitation of the Prince was remarkable." This is astonishing in view of his treatment of the Princess just before the confinement. This pose as the anxious and devoted husband certainly deceived no one, least of all his father, who wrote him an angry letter of remonstrance.

"You removed the Princess," he says, "twice in the week preceding her confinement from the place of my residence in expectation, as you voluntarily declared, of her labour, and both times upon your return you industriously concealed from the knowledge of me and the Queen every circumstance of this important affair; and you at last precipitately hurried the Princess from Hampton Court in a condition not to be named. After having then, in execution of your own determined measures, exposed both the Princess and her child to the greatest perils, you now plead surprise and tenderness for the Princess as the motives that occasioned these repeated indignities."

This Royal lecture, like many that had gone before, had no effect on the Prince, who as soon as his wife had recovered, left Carlton House, and took up his residence at Windsor, while the Princess was left again in the care of Lady Jersey. She was obliged to dine alone, and except for a daily ride in the Park was not allowed to go anywhere. She protested against this treatment both to the King and her husband, but without avail. From her husband she received, through Lady Cholmondeley, the suggestion that "they ought to separate." This proposal had already been made to her repeatedly. "As I lay in," she says in a letter to a friend, "I received a message through Lord Cholmondeley to tell me I never was to have



the honour of inhabiting the same room with my husband again. I said, very well—but as my memory was short, I begged to have this polite message in writing from him. I had it and was free.”

The reply the Princess received to this appeal deserves quotation in full, if only for the revelation it gives of the Prince’s character. Thackeray in *The Four Georges* asserts that all the Prince’s letters were written by others, and that he merely affixed his signature, but surely this epistle could have come from no hand but his own. Here it is :

“Madam, as Lord Cholmondeley informs me that you wish I would define in writing the terms upon which we are to live, I shall endeavour to explain myself on that head with as much clearness and as much propriety as the nature of the subject will admit. Our inclinations are not in our power, nor should either of us be held answerable to the other because nature has not made us suitable to each other. Tranquil and comfortable society is, however, in our power ; let our intercourse therefore be restricted to that, and I will distinctly subscribe to the condition you required through Lady Cholmondeley, that even in the event of any accident happening to my daughter (which I trust Providence in its mercy will avert) I shall not infringe the terms of the restriction by proposing at any period a connection of a more particular nature. I shall now finally close this disagreeable correspondence, trusting that, as we have completely explained ourselves to each other, the rest of our lives will be passed in uninterrupted tranquillity.

I am, Madam, with great truth,

Very sincerely yours,

GEORGE P.”

To this amazing letter the Princess sent a spirited reply :

“The avowal of your conversation with Lord Cholmondeley neither surprises nor offends me. It merely confirmed what you have tacitly insinuated for this twelve months. But after this it would be a want of delicacy, or rather an unworthy meanness in me, were I to complain of those conditions which you impose upon yourself.

I should have returned no answer to your letter if it had not been conceived in terms to make it doubtful whether this arrangement proceeds from you or from me ; and you are aware that the credit of it belongs to you alone.

The letter which you announce to me as the last obliges me to communicate to the King, as to my sovereign and my father, both your avowal and my answer. You will find enclosed the copy of my letter to the King. I apprise you of it, that I may not incur the slightest reproach of duplicity from you. As I have at this moment no protector but His Majesty, I refer myself solely to him upon this subject ; and if my conduct meets his approbation, I shall be in some degree at least consoled. I retain every sentiment of gratitude for the situation in which I find myself as Princess of Wales ; enabled by your means, to indulge in the free exercise of a virtue dear to my heart—I mean charity.

It will be my duty likewise to act upon another motive, that of giving an example of patience and resignation under every trial.

Do me the justice to believe that I shall never cease to pray for your happiness and to be your much devoted

(Signed) CAROLINE.”

The King was shocked when he learnt the true state of affairs, and sent the Princess an affectionate letter suggesting reconciliation. The Duke of Leeds in his *Memoranda* records that even Thurlow "thought with me that the Prince's conduct could only be imputed to madness, and expressed himself as much struck by the good sense and discretion of the Princess."

Men of all parties deplored the Prince's action and there was much sympathy for his unfortunate wife. It is difficult to understand the attitude of Queen Charlotte in this domestic crisis. For years she had been at open enmity with her eldest son. During the King's illness he had heaped insult and indignities upon her, and shown a shameful disregard for her interests. But now there was a change. Though the King was proof against his blandishments the Queen was easily won over by her son's flatteries and attentions, and she took every opportunity of snubbing and insulting the unfortunate Princess. This dragon of the virtues even went the length of openly patronizing the Countess of Jersey, who was a welcome guest at Windsor. The old Queen merely smiled approval when the Prince publicly squeezed the hand of Lady Jersey. Nor did she show any resentment when this lady appeared at Court wearing pearl bracelets which the Prince had given his wife as a wedding-present. These he had taken back from the Princess and given to his mistress.

The Princess had borne these and other insults with remarkable patience. She was too proud to protest, but she was high-spirited and courageous, and there was a point beyond which she was not prepared to go, even in the interests of peace. From the first she declined to hold intercourse with Lady

Jersey except in her husband's presence. But when the break came Caroline determined to be rid of her altogether, and invited her to resign her post as Lady of the Bedchamber. But this Lady Jersey refused to do. The Princess then told her husband very plainly in a letter that his mistress showed an utter lack of delicacy by clinging to an office in her Household. The Prince would do nothing; so she then turned to the King, who gave Lady Jersey the alternative of resigning or being dismissed. Lady Jersey then resigned her appointment and in a long and spiteful letter spoke of her "respectful attachment and gratitude to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales which can never end but with my life."

These laudable sentiments were to be severely tested in the near future.

As soon as the Princess realized that the prospects of reconciliation with her husband were hopeless she removed to Montagu House, at Charlton, near Blackheath. But she had to go without her child, which by special instructions of the Prince was lodged at Carlton House, under the direction of Lady Elgin. At Blackheath the Princess had many callers and she soon had an intimate circle of her own. Among her regular visitors were Lord Chancellor Thurlow, who was adviser to both parties in the quarrel, the Duke and Duchess of Hamilton, Sir Gilbert Elliot, and Lord and Lady Wood. Those of her visitors who have left records tell us that she was "positively a handsome woman, lively and pleasing," and utterly undeserving of "such strange neglect." Her only friend in the Royal Family, the King, also visited her at her home and generally treated her with affection and kindness.

The maternal instinct which, as Brougham in later times so often said, was the root cause of all her troubles, was strongly manifested during Caroline's sojourn at Montagu House. Deprived of her own child by her husband's decree she found an outlet for her thwarted affections by ministering to the needs of poor children. To this end she founded and maintained a home for eight or nine orphan children, and in so doing found solace for the loneliness and misery of her domestic life.

Meanwhile the Prince again showed himself faithful in his faithlessness, and the lady whose hand he had so often kissed in the Queen's drawing-room found herself deserted for his first wife, Mrs. Fitzherbert. Soon after the Princess left Carlton House he began to write to her, but for a time she ignored his letters. She rightly regarded herself as his lawful wife, and as she was a religious woman she looked upon his intercourse with the Princess Caroline as unhallowed and immoral. For a time she refused to listen to his entreaties and persuasions, but when at last she became convinced that there was no prospect that the Prince and Princess would ever become reconciled she agreed, as a Roman Catholic, to submit the matter to the Pope and to abide by his decision. If this were unfavourable she resolved to live abroad. The Pope declared her to be the Prince of Wales's wife in accordance with the law of the Roman Catholic Church, and further stated that if her husband was truly penitent and would honestly fulfil his marriage-vows, it was her duty to return to him. So for a time they lived together again, and as one of Mrs. Fitzherbert's conditions was that the intrigue with Lady Jersey should cease, any hopes that this complaisant lady entertained

of further favours from the Prince were finally extinguished. Princess Caroline would have been more than human if she had felt no satisfaction at the downfall of Lady Jersey, but she bore no animus to Mrs. Fitzherbert. On the contrary, she spoke of this lady as the Prince's true wife, and more than once said it was a pity the Prince ever broke with her. Later when the Princess was charged with misconduct she said to one of her accusers: "The only *faux pas* I have ever committed was my marriage with the husband of Mrs. Fitzherbert."

Amid the constant bickerings of the King and his eldest son, and the latter and his wife, the welfare of the young Princess Charlotte was neglected or forgotten. But in 1804 when this little lady was eight years old the King awoke to a sense of his responsibility and prepared a plan for her education. In doing this he was doubtless actuated by a desire to help his daughter-in-law, the Princess, for whom he had great affection. His first excursion after his recovery from his mental illness in 1801 had been to Montagu House. When he arrived at her house, she was still in bed, but feeling that it would be unpardonable to keep a King waiting, and that King her affectionate uncle, she presently appeared wearing her bed-gown and night-cap! He told a friend that during his illness he had been constantly thinking of the Princess, and had resolved to visit her the first time he went out, without telling anyone. But for the King's protection the Princess would have been denied access to her child, for the Prince's hatred of his wife had become a mania, and he could scarcely control himself when speaking of her.

When the King made known his intentions about

the little Princess, the Prince of Wales held out the olive-branch by offering the King the complete charge of his daughter. But the King was doubtful and suspicious and in a letter to Lord Eldon betrayed his misgivings: "Undoubtedly the Prince of Wales's offer of having dear little Charlotte's education and principles attended to is the best evidence he can give of returning to a sense of what he owes his father. . . . So much he can add at present that if he takes the superintendence of his granddaughter he does not mean to destroy the rights of the mother; that therefore the Princess of Wales whose injuries deserve the utmost attention of the King as her own conduct has proved irreproachable."

This and other letters of the King to the Lord Chancellor in which he said he had directed the Princess "to state whatever she pleased to the Chancellor as the person alone to be trusted by her," greatly irritated the Prince of Wales.

"What do you think now, my lord," he said to Lord Thurlow, after an interview with the Lord Chancellor, "of your old friend Eldon, whom you puffed up to me as a sound lawyer and an honest man?"

"Indeed, sir," replied the wily old placeman, "I think he has lost the little law he once had, and is become a very great scoundrel."

For a time the King showed great reluctance to see his son, but at last a formal interview took place at which common civilities were exchanged. For a time the Prince withdrew his offer to surrender his child to the King, on the ground that this would give Caroline free access to her daughter. This infuriated the King afresh who had set his heart on the plan he

had formed, but at last the Prince gave way, and Princess Charlotte was installed at Shrewsbury House under the charge of Lady de Clifford as governess. Under this agreement it was arranged that the Princess should see her daughter at regular intervals.

For several years after she left Carlton House Princess Caroline lived in semi-retirement, and the public heard little of her affairs. She entertained freely, and devoted much of her leisure to music and painting. As she had no friends at Windsor except the King, her visits were limited to formal calls on the Queen, who received her always with frigid politeness. In those days she was described by one who knew her intimately as a pretty woman with fine light hair, features very delicately formed, eyes brilliant and penetrating, a beautiful mouth and a fine complexion ; but her head was too large for her body and her neck too short.

Mrs. Berry, whose name is familiar as the friend and correspondent of Horace Walpole, was a less kindly critic : " Her conversation is certainly uncommon, lively, odd and clever. What a pity that she has not a grain of common sense, not an ounce of ballast to prevent high spirits and a coarse mind running away with her, and allowing her to act undecorously and ridiculously whenever an occasion offers."

If no man is a hero to his valet, still less is a Princess a model of the virtues to her ladies-in-waiting, and it would have been miraculous if all this rather flighty and irresponsible Princess said and thought and did had won the approval of the conventional and highly cultured Lady Charlotte Burry, who was the sister of one Scottish Duke and the half-sister of another.



In one of the few reviews he wrote for *The Times* Thackeray let loose the lightnings of his wrath on Lady Charlotte and her Diary. He also pilloried her book in the *Yellowplush Papers*. But years later he thought better of her Diary, and put the material he found in it to excellent use in his brilliant lecture on George IV.

It is evident to every reader of this much-discussed Diary that the writer loved her mistress, and that if at times she indulged in harsh criticisms, these are but expressions of the exasperation she felt when the Princess by her indiscretions placed weapons in the hands of her enemies. But in passing judgment on the Princess, Lady Charlotte failed to make due allowance for the difficulties of her mistress's position, and expected this harassed and persecuted woman to be consistently calm, dignified and prudent amid the thousand trials that beset her. "I have never known," says Lady Charlotte, "a more extraordinary person than the Princess. She writes occasionally, with much spirit, and many of the copies of her letters to the Prince are both clever and touching. Sometimes there is a vein of exalted sentiment in what she says and does, that quite astonishes me, and makes me rub my eyes and open my ears to know if it is the same person who condescends to talk low nonsense, and sometimes even gross ribaldry. One day I think her all perfection—another I know not what to think. The tissue of her character is certainly more uneven than that of any other person I was ever acquainted with. One day there is tinsel and tawdry—another worsted—another silk and satin."

On State occasions only did the Princess appear at Court. The last time she met and spoke to her husband was at the wedding of the Princess Royal. The Prince's

hatred of his wife never for one moment slackened. He let it be known through the officers of his Household that the doors of Carlton House would be closed against those that visited the Princess. But despite this, as Lady Charlotte says, many Tory peers and their wives, as well as other people of the highest fashion, continued to visit Blackheath and dine with the Princess. For they knew she had the moral support and friendship of the King. But when at last the King was declared too ill to reign and the recognition of the Prince of Wales as Regent invested him with supreme authority, all these loyal ladies and gentlemen turned their faces to the rising sun, and the Princess found herself deserted.

Money, or the lack of it, was also a source of embarrassment to the Princess. It had been arranged when she separated from her husband that instead of receiving a settled income her bills should be sent to Carlton House, and that all salaries and other expenses of her household should be paid by the Prince. As the Prince never paid anyone except under pressure, confusion arose, and tradesmen became shy of giving credit to the Princess. The Prince then appointed a Colonel Thomas as her financial manager. But this gentleman had no knowledge of business management, and was not in the least helpful. In her difficulty the Princess appealed to the Duke of Kent, who in his turn explained the Princess's position to Mrs. Fitzherbert. This lady was in no way jealous of the Prince's other wife. On the contrary, she sympathized with the Princess, and as she had at that time great influence over the Prince, she used it with such effect that the financial tangle was quickly straightened out. For this the Princess was sincerely grateful.

## CHAPTER X

### THE DELICATE INVESTIGATION

THE Princess Caroline was not conventional, and this in the eyes of society is ever a deadly sin. The pastimes of ladies of the period had no charm for her. Had she gambled heavily and spent her time in frequenting race-courses and dances, the eccentricities which were a constant theme of discussion among ladies in the Prince's circle would probably have passed unnoticed. But she delighted in nursing babies and young children, even those of poor people. She took promenades in Parks patronized by the middle class. Her clothes were often hideously unfashionable. She drove about in a gig with only one attendant. It was also whispered that often she lunched on sweets and pastries.

All this indicated plebeian tastes unbefitting a lady of Royal blood.

Her manners were foreign, her speech the more indiscreet because of her imperfect knowledge of English, and her experience of the usages of society distressingly slight, so that often she shocked those who met her.

Among the Princess's friends at Blackheath was Sir Sidney Smith who won renown at the siege of Acre, and was at that time something of a national hero. Sir Sidney frequently dined at the Princess's house and in time came to be known as one of her

trusted and intimate friends. Another neighbour at Blackheath was Sir John Douglas, a colonel of marines, who had also served at the siege of Acre. Sir Sidney, who knew Sir John Douglas and his wife very well, introduced them to the Princess. The Princess, always impulsive, took a great fancy to Lady Douglas and they were soon on confidential terms. The Princess poured out to this new friend, of whom she knew nothing, the whole story of her woes. Names were freely mentioned and secrets revealed.

This was all very silly and indiscreet, and the Princess has been blamed for placing herself in the hands of this treacherous pair. For Sir John Douglas and his wife were little better than blackmailers, and people of disreputable antecedents, though this Sir Sidney Smith, who had introduced them to the Princess, naturally did not know.

This intercourse with Lady Douglas and her husband lasted for a year. Then the Princess learned some unpleasant facts about these friends, and decided to see them no more. About this time Sir John's military duties compelled the Douglasses to leave Blackheath. But they returned in six months and Lady Douglas called on the Princess again. The Princess refused to receive her, and requested her not to call again. Lady Douglas was furiously angry.

Princess Caroline quickly discovered that she had made a bitter and unscrupulous enemy. She began to receive anonymous letters containing threats, warnings and imprecations. She found out that she was surrounded by spies, that her neighbours and servants were bribed to report on her conduct, and that even some of her guests were inquisitive about her personal affairs. Sir John Douglas charged the Princess with

inspiring some cartoons in which his wife and Sir Sidney Smith were caricatured.

As soon as she heard of these attacks the Princess claimed the protection of her brother-in-law, the Duke of Kent. The Duke conducted a thorough investigation into the affair, and satisfied himself that no blame whatever attached to the Princess. In the course of the inquiry, he went to see Sir John Douglas, heard all he had to say, and finally extracted from him a promise that the Princess should no longer be annoyed with baseless accusations.

But despite the assurance he had given the Duke of Kent, Sir John Douglas had no intention of letting the matter drop. He knew that the Prince of Wales hated his wife, and was always pleased to hear anything to her disadvantage. He waited his chance, and at last it came in the autumn of 1805. He then obtained audience with the Duke of Sussex, another of the Prince's brothers. He unfolded his sorry tale, and the Duke, duly horrified, carried it to the Prince of Wales. The Prince in his turn, righteously indignant, sent for Lady Douglas, who confirmed the story her husband had told. Her statement that the Princess was the mother of the little boy—William Austin—who was an inmate of the house at Blackheath, and other minor accusations, were sworn to before a Commissioner of Oaths.

The Prince then consulted Lord Thurlow and Sir Samuel Romilly and placed Lady Douglas's statement before them. But the lawyers shook their heads and said it would be impossible to act on this lady's unsupported word.

But the outraged husband could not, in the interests of justice, allow the matter to stop here. He employed

a solicitor to obtain more evidence, and this was obtained from two of the Prince's servants, who had been sent to Blackheath to act as footmen to the Princess. These witnesses not only confirmed Lady Douglas's statement, but made further charges on their own account.

There was joy in the Prince's camp when this evidence came to hand, and the Dandies who crowded the assemblies at Carlton House hailed Lady Douglas as an ally who would help the Prince to get rid of the wife he detested. They revelled in her spicy story which covered sixty sheets of manuscript, and her evidence was soon the principal topic of discussion at Watier's and Brooks's Clubs.

But the Prince himself acted with propriety. He approached Lord Grenville, the Prime Minister, placed the evidence that had been collected before him, and demanded an inquiry into the conduct of the Princess of Wales. Grenville consulted his colleagues in the Government. After a long conference ministers decided that the only course open to them was to ask the King for an inquiry into the charges, but they suggested "with a view to avoiding public scandal that the inquiry should be held behind closed doors."

The King agreed to these proposals, and in May 1806 a Royal Commission was appointed, the members of which were the Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor Erskine, Lord Spencer, and Chief Justice Ellenborough.

The procedure adopted by the Commission in conducting this inquiry was ludicrously unfair. The Commissioners chose their own witnesses. The Princess herself knew nothing of the charges that were made against her; nor was she permitted to

make any statement, or give evidence or call witnesses in her own defence.

But if the Prince of Wales took no active part in the inquiry, he was as usual busily employed in pulling the strings behind the stage. His close personal friend Lord Moira interviewed several of the witnesses, and tried to get new ones. He approached two men of high standing, Dr. Edmeades and Dr. Mills, whose names were mentioned in the evidence of a maid-servant, F. Lloyd. This woman had stated that the doctors were convinced of the Princess's guilt, and had stated this in plain terms. When interviewed each of the doctors denied that he had said anything of the kind, and they declared, with heat, that an unwarrantable use had been made of their names in the matter. But Lord Moira in his eagerness to serve the Prince continued to ply them with questions, until at last, finding he could not draw either of the doctors into making statements that suited his purpose, he resorted to threats. But the doctors would not be bullied, and Edmeades told him that if more was said he would take legal measures to protect himself.

The evidence given before this Royal Commission as published in *The Book* makes sorry reading. The charges made by Sir John Douglas and his wife were shown to be baseless by a number of witnesses, and were adjudged to be absolutely false.

Mrs. Lisle, one of the Princess's Ladies of the Bed-chamber, also called to support the prosecution, denied the possibility of any misconduct. The servant F. Lloyd was hopelessly discredited by the two doctors, and her charge of misconduct between Sir Sidney Smith and the Princess was contemptuously dismissed.

Two servants of the Prince, Bidgood and Cole,

who had been transferred to the Princess's household, made sensational charges. They accused Sir Sidney Smith, Sir Thomas Lawrence the artist, Captain Manby, Captain Moore, Lord Hood, and the great parliamentarian Canning, of guilty intercourse with the Princess.

When these statements were challenged and Cole was asked for the grounds of his accusation against Sir Sidney Smith, he said he knew the admiral was guilty because his wife had told him that F. Lloyd had told her, that M. Wilson had told *her*. When M. Wilson, the apparent source of this charge, was questioned on the subject she denied absolutely that she had said anything against the Princess and the admiral. Cole was further confounded when F. Lloyd retracted her statement.

Sir Sidney Smith and Captain Manby were abroad when the Royal Commission held its sittings. But the other men accused denied the charges. When Sir Thomas Lawrence appeared before them he was blandly informed by the Commissioners that no breath of suspicion rested on him. The Princess alone among the accused was given no opportunity of declaring or proving her innocence.

The Commission completed its work expeditiously. Though only appointed on May 29, its report was sent to the King on July 14th. In this report the Commission states :

“ We are happy to declare that there is no foundation whatever for believing that the child (William Austin) is the child of Her Royal Highness—a fact so fully contradicted and by so many witnesses that we cannot think it entitled to the smallest credit.



There are, however, other particulars concerning the conduct of Her Royal Highness such as must, especially considering her exalted rank and station, necessarily give occasion to very unfavourable interpretations, particularly the examinations of Robert Bidgood, William Cole, Frances Lloyd, and Mrs. Lisle, witnesses who cannot in our judgment be suspected of any unfavourable bias, and whose veracity in this respect we have seen no ground to question. We think the circumstances to which we now refer, particularly those stated to have passed between Her Royal Highness and Captain Manby, must be credited until they receive decisive contradiction, and if true, are justly entitled to the most serious consideration.

Signed

ERSKINE,  
SPENCER,

GRENVILLE,  
ELLENBOROUGH."

The first paragraph in this report completely exonerated the Princess from the charge of being the mother of the boy Austin.

The statements in the second paragraph will not bear examination. It is absurd to suggest of the four witnesses mentioned that they could not be suspected of any bias and that their veracity could not be questioned. The only one of the four whose veracity could not be doubted was Mrs. Lisle, a lady of undoubted probity and honour, and her severest censure on her mistress was that her style of conversation might occasionally be called *flirting*.

Of the other witnesses Frances Lloyd had been hopelessly discredited by the two doctors, whilst Bidgood and Cole were paid servants of the Prince of Wales. These men had flung mud about on all sides, and

charged a number of eminent men of having guilty intercourse with the Princess. Yet when these gentlemen came forward and asserted their innocence, they were assured by the Commissioners that no breath of suspicion rested on them, in other words, that the stories told about them by Bidgood and Cole were utterly false.

Then, again, Bidgood and Cole had given evidence to prove that Caroline was the mother of Willie Austin. Now as the Commissioners had expressly exonerated her on this charge, and consequently disbelieved these witnesses, on this count as well as the others it is difficult to understand why these creatures were not branded as incorrigible liars.

The reference to Captain Manby in the last paragraph of the report demands further elucidation. While the Commission was holding its sittings Captain Manby, a distinguished Naval officer, was on service in the West Indies, and so the "decisive contradiction" which the Commission demanded could not be given for several months, and in this interval the Princess was left under a cloud of suspicion. But finally this was dissipated, for as soon as he returned Captain Manby, in spite of the strongest pressure from the Prince's friends, made an affidavit that the charge against the Princess and himself was "a vile and wicked invention, wholly and absolutely false."

The mixed verdict of the Royal Commission placed the Princess for a time in a difficult position. She had been condemned unheard, and had no opportunity of refuting the strange versions of the evidence against her that circulated in the drawing-rooms of Mayfair. But she had firm and sagacious friends who advised her in her extremity. Eldon was an ever-ready coun-

sellor. The ill-fated Perceval, so soon to be Prime Minister and die by an assassin's stroke, profoundly believed in her innocence, and was her fervent champion. But the most powerful of her friends, the King, though willing to receive her, said "there were circumstances of conduct on the part of the Princess which His Majesty never could regard but with serious concern." But when she wrote asking His Majesty to fix a date for her reception, she was informed after long delay that the Prince of Wales thought such an interview would be prejudicial, as he was about to put the papers in the case into the hands of his own lawyer.

At this Caroline lost her patience. She thought, and in this her advisers agreed, that the time had come when she should be publicly received and her position recognized. For six months she had been ostracized by Court and Society. By the advice of Perceval she wrote again stating that unless she received some token of recognition as Princess of Wales, she would publish the evidence given before the Royal Commission, and ask for the verdict of the nation. A powerful statement of her case was drawn up by Perceval. This, on March 5th, was laid before the King.

In addition to this Perceval found time, amid his many avocations, to prepare the evidence given before the Royal Commission on Caroline's case, for publication. This he saw through the Press. This work, known as *The Book*, was just about to be published when through the death of Fox the Ministry of "All the Talents" fell, and Perceval was called upon to form a new Government. As he was now the leader of the new administration, Perceval found it impossible to identify himself with a work that contained so

crushing an exposure of the Prince of Wales, so the book was withheld from publication and the copies were bought up at the expense of the Government.

The new Ministry, which included Caroline's adviser Eldon, took up the cudgels for her. Perceval suggested to the King that she should be received by the Royal Family and given an official residence, whilst Eldon assured him that no evidence worthy of attention had been given against the Princess.

These representations had their effect. A suite of apartments was reserved for her use in Kensington Palace, and she was publicly received by the King and Queen.

This public recognition freed Caroline from an abominable stigma, and gave her once more her rightful place in Society. But she had suffered cruelly. From the day of her marriage she had been a target for the mud which the Prince and his friends had been constantly throwing; while for a year she had been deserted by her friends, avoided by the Court, and separated from her daughter.

She had suffered greatly, but now friends began again to gather round her. The next few years were the happiest she spent in England. She received a few intimates, attended the theatre regularly, and was partly freed from her husband's persecutions by the deed of separation between them, which was signed by the King and the Lord Chancellor as well as the Prince and Princess. Under the terms of this agreement the Prince agreed to pay her debts, and make her an allowance of £22,000.

But during this period of comparative repose the Prince's enmity to his wife never slumbered. As long as the King remained her champion he was

unable to wreak his vengeance on the unfortunate woman. But when in 1811 His Majesty became so ill that all hope of recovery was abandoned, the Prince not only assumed the sovereign rights of the King, but also through the Royal Marriage Act a greater authority over his wife and child than that of any private citizen. It was a time of crisis. Great Britain was waging a life-and-death struggle with Napoleon. But to the frivolous Prince dallying with his latest mistress, Lady Hertford, and immersed in the pursuit of pleasure, domestic affairs were of greater importance than national interests, and he made no attempt to disguise either his dislike for his father or his hatred for his wife and daughter.

Once when Perceval consulted him on an important decision that had to be taken about the Peninsular War, he became irritated and exclaimed, "Damn the North, and damn Lord Wellington! Can you say or do nothing by which I can get rid of that damned Princess of Wales?" Between the Queen and the Prince Regent, the Princess Charlotte led a lonely and unhappy existence. The former was her jailer; the latter her moral preceptor. The Queen disliked her because she was high-spirited and independent. The Regent who liked to monopolize the limelight could brook no rival near the throne, and never allowed her public recognition as the future sovereign. So the poor girl was secluded in the schoolroom, and suffered the petty persecutions of the malicious old Queen. She was allowed to make no friends of her own age, and her only companions were the severe dowagers of the Court. Her aunts took their cue from the Queen, and only noticed her to utter words of rebuke. She was not allowed to visit the Opera.

Even then she was not allowed to witness any public ceremonies. When in 1814 the Czar of Russia and other European monarchs assembled in London to celebrate the fall of Buonaparte and the Regent entertained them with unparalleled splendour, his heiress, the future Queen of England, though eighteen years of age, was not permitted either to participate in or even witness these celebrations. Only one privilege she had. Once a fortnight she was allowed, under supervision, to see her mother. She was however allowed to write to the Princess, but only on condition that her letters were first submitted to the Queen. To fit her for her future position as Queen of England, her father had her instructed in Whig principles by his henchman Adam, so that she became a loyal supporter of the party which her father deserted as soon as it suited his purpose.

Once when her health was drunk at the Brighton Pavilion the Prince thus acknowledged the toast : " I have made it my care to instil into the mind and heart of my daughter the knowledge and love of the true principles of the British Constitution ; and I have pointed out to her young understanding, as a model for study, the political conduct of my most revered and lamented friend, Mr. Fox, who has asserted and maintained with such transcendent force the just principles upon which the government under this excellent Constitution ought to be administered, for the true and solid dignity of the Crown, and the real security, freedom and happiness of the people."

Soon afterwards when the sentiments expressed in these grandiloquent periods were forgotten by the royal orator, a strange scene took place at Carlton House, which became a subject of excited gossip in

clubs and drawing-rooms. The Prince gave a great dinner to the Duke and Duchess of York, to which Sheridan, Adam, Lord and Lady Keith and other nobilities were invited. For once the Princess Charlotte was allowed to emerge from her solitary confinement and meet her uncle and aunt. It was an occasion of high revelry. The Prince and the Duke set the pace and vast quantities of wine were drunk. Then, before the cloth was removed, the Prince began to babble about politics. He was tired of the Whigs, he said, and was sure they all hated him except Lord Erskine, Ponsonby and Sheridan. They were incapable and untrustworthy,—Grey was a pompous pedant,—Grenville a dotard,—they had done nothing for him, and he would do nothing for them. Lord Lauderdale who was present took umbrage at the Prince's remarks, and was moved to rise and defend his absent friends. This he did in plain but respectful terms. But the Prince took no notice of Lauderdale, and continued to abuse his old political associates in unmeasured terms.

This was too much for the Princess Charlotte. She got up from her chair in tears, and without a word left the room, Sheridan leading her to the door.

This singular incident inspired Byron to write the well-known lines :

“ Weep, daughter of a royal line,  
 A sire's disgrace, a realm's decay ;  
 Ah ! happy if each tear of thine  
 Could wash a father's fault away.  
 Weep, for thy tears are virtue's tears—  
 Auspicious to these suffering isles ;  
 And be each drop in future years  
 Repaid thee by a people's smiles.”

The young Princess was high-spirited and courageous, engaging and amiable. With all but her nearest relatives she was popular. Conscious of her high destiny, she deeply resented her virtual imprisonment, and when she heard, at the age of seventeen, that the Duchess of Leeds was to succeed Lady de Clifford as her governess she wrote to Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, and announced that as her late governess had resigned, she was now old enough to do without another. She also suggested that she should now have an establishment with her own ladies-in-waiting. The Prime Minister was perturbed. The Prince when he heard of the letter was first astonished and then furiously angry. Dragging Eldon the Lord Chancellor with him, he hurried down to Windsor. There the young Princess was brought before an informal court of justice over which the Queen presided. Princess Charlotte gaily faced her accusers, and was not to be cowed. The Regent stormed and bullied.

"What," he snapped, "do you mean by refusing to have a governess?"

"You will find the answer to that in my letter," she replied airily.

The Regent became apoplectic.

"As long as I live," he shouted angrily, "you shall have no establishment unless you marry."

The Lord Chancellor then attempted to bully the girl in his best forensic manner, and gruffly explained to her the law of the country as to the Regent's rights.

"What would you do, Eldon," asked the Regent, "if you had a daughter like this?"

"I would lock her up," replied the Chancellor.

Princess Charlotte made no answer, but with great



dignity withdrew to the room of one of her aunts, where, bursting into tears, she cried :

“What would the King say if he knew that his granddaughter had been compared to the granddaughter of a collier ? ”

It was a drawn battle. The Regent had clashed with a will firmer than his own, and realized that the only dignified course was to temporize. To drive the Princess into open rebellion might be disastrous. So a concession was made. It was agreed that a governess should be dispensed with and that the Duchess of Leeds should act as her adviser and companion.

But this patched-up peace was of little value, and only affected a temporary lull in the battle between the Regent and his wife and daughter. The Princess Charlotte had always loyally supported her mother's cause, but when Brougham and others suggested that the Regent was anxious to divorce Caroline so that he could marry again and so secure the chance of a male heir to the Crown, she became more bitter against her father than ever. Her childhood had been sad and lonely, and she had suffered much from the tyranny of the Queen and her father. Her only consolation during this dreary period had been that some day she would fulfil her destiny and become Queen, when it would be in her power to reward those who had been devoted to her mother's cause. The thought that she might now be cheated of her birthright was intolerable. She declared that her mother's interests and her own were identical, and that they must join hands to defeat the common enemy.

Her methods were those of a girl in her teens. She manifested impatience under the reproaches of the Queen, openly resented slighting references to her

mother, and behind her grandmother's back alluded to her flippantly as "The Merry Wife of Windsor." The Regent made it his business to reprimand her for this.

"Don't you know," he remarked, with a shocked expression, "that my mother is Queen of England?"

"That is so," she replied sweetly, "but *you* seem to forget that my mother is Princess of Wales."

There was no reply to this devastating retort, but the Regent was afterwards heard to declare that in future his daughter should be under his own immediate control.

The strength of character of the Princess Charlotte won the commendation of that cynical observer Henry Brougham, who was not wont to waste words of praise upon anyone. The following extracts from his letters to Creevey show this :

"As for the little Princess in general, it is a long chapter. Her firmness I am sure of, and she has proved to a singular degree advisable and discreet. . . .

"The young Princess and her father have had frequent rows of late, but one pretty serious one. He was angry at her for flirting with the Duke of Devonshire and suspected she was talking politics. This began it. It signifies nothing how they go on this day or that,—in the long run quarrel they must. *He* has no equality of temper, or any other kind of sense to keep well with her, and she has a spice of her mother's spirit ; so interfere they must at every turn. I suspect they will before the above Duke. He is giving in to it I hear and the Prince will turn short about in all likelihood, after making him dance and dangle about, and perhaps break with his friends, and put on his dignified air, on which he piques himself

and then say—‘ Your Grace will be pleased to recollect the difference between you and my daughter ! ’ ”

The assassination of Perceval in 1812 deprived Princess Caroline and her daughter of the truest and most loyal friend they had. “ No, no, there is no more society for me in England,” she exclaimed mournfully. “ No, I repeat it, as long as dat man lives *les choses vont de mal en pire* for me,—for whoever comes in to serve him, even dose calling themselves my friends, are jußt the same, they will set me aside and worship the Regent, *enfin*. I have had patience for seventeen years, and I conclude I mußt for seventeen years longer.”

The position of Princess Caroline had never been enviable. It was now almost desperate. The Prince as Regent was King in all but name. Perceval and his successor in the Premiership, Lord Liverpool, were accorded as little respect as the Regent’s lady, and their influence with him was nil. He had immense patronage at his disposal, and all who had supported the old King in his hey-day, transferred their allegiances, and there was brisk competition among his former enemies for his nod and smile. As it was well known that those who were friendly with his wife had no chance of enjoying Royal favour, Caroline found herself more and more deserted. Her only supporters were those who hoped to make political capital out of her misfortunes.

But the Regent was not satisfied with merely ostracizing her. He had done that with varying success for several years. He wished to drive her from the country or, failing this, to goad her into some folly. Seven years before he had sent Colonel MacMahon—a member of Parliament, who carried out commissions

for him with which he did not care to soil his own hands,—to Captain Manby's lodgings with a letter in which Manby was asked to name any sum not over £40,000 if he would give such evidence as would convict the Princess of Wales. Now he employed the same agent to bribe the editors and staffs of newspapers to publish scurrilous articles and paragraphs libelling his wife. Among the propaganda matter sent out by this agent, and published in the Press, were forged letters purporting to come from the Princess. In one of his letters to Creevey, Brougham throws light on these dubious efforts to corrupt the newspapers.

“A strange attempt was made by MacMahon to bribe and then to bully the editor of the *Star* (which is greatly in the Princess's interest). He wanted him to insert a paragraph *against her*. Last Saturday he went again, and such a scene passed as I would fain send you. . . . It began with enquiries and offers,—to know the *advisers* of the paper on the subject of the Princess, and whether she had anything to say to it, and offers of paying for a paragraph ; and ended with his saying he should come again on Monday ; and then going to see the press, and talking to everyone of 20 printers, and giving them two guineas to drink ! We had a man to meet him and identify and witness his bribery.”

Brougham and Whitbread, the most influential members of the Radical section of the Whig party, were now actively working in Caroline's interest. Of the two Whitbread was the more sincere and disinterested. But both saw in the tribulation of the Princess a chance of injuring the Tory Ministry and revenging themselves on the Regent for his betrayal

of the Whig cause. After long consultations with her, they persuaded Caroline that the time for passive submission was over, and that an aggressive policy must be pursued. Brougham drafted a letter of remonstrance to the Regent against his harsh treatment of the Princess and her daughter. This letter the Princess copied and signed. One copy was sent sealed for the Regent, the other open, for the Prime Minister. The sealed letter was returned unopened and sent back several times before it was finally received.

The Regent took fright when he received this missive. He knew or guessed who had inspired it, and sent Lord Moira to Whitbread to invite him to Carlton House to inspect some papers. But the sturdy brewer was proof against the Regent's blandishments and refused the invitation. Brougham was in high glee at the effect the letter produced, and was for having it published. Creevey was consulted, and the letter duly appeared in the *Morning Chronicle*.

The effect of this powerful and moving appeal was extraordinary. The nation was drawn into the dispute. The letter depicted the anguish of mother separated from her child. This was an issue that everyone, even the most ignorant, could understand. It was one too that appealed to the better instincts of English people; and it went home. The Regent more than ever before became a target for popular abuse, and there was universal sympathy for Caroline. "I recollect no instance," said Brougham, "of such effects being produced by any statement of a case of appeal to the public against a grievance."

But the letter had a contrary effect on the Prince. The Pharaoh of Carlton House hardened his heart,

and instead of responding to Caroline's supplications called his law officers together and instructed them to lay before the Privy Council the evidence given before the Royal Commission against the Princess in 1806, so that the Council would be in a position to decide whether the Princess was a fit and proper person to have charge of the heiress to the Crown. But the inquiry by the Privy Council proved abortive. A report was drawn up, advocating restraint and restriction, but the Lord Chancellor refused to sign it, stating that it would be an implication that he had changed his opinion as to the serious charges of adultery and pregnancy made seven years before. But for the interposition of Lord Ellenborough, who believed the Princess guilty, the Council would have sided with the Chancellor and made a declaration in her favour. Instead, it was decided to leave this issue in abeyance, and simply to declare "That the intercourse between Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales and H.R.H. the Princess Charlotte should continue to be subject to regulations and restraint."

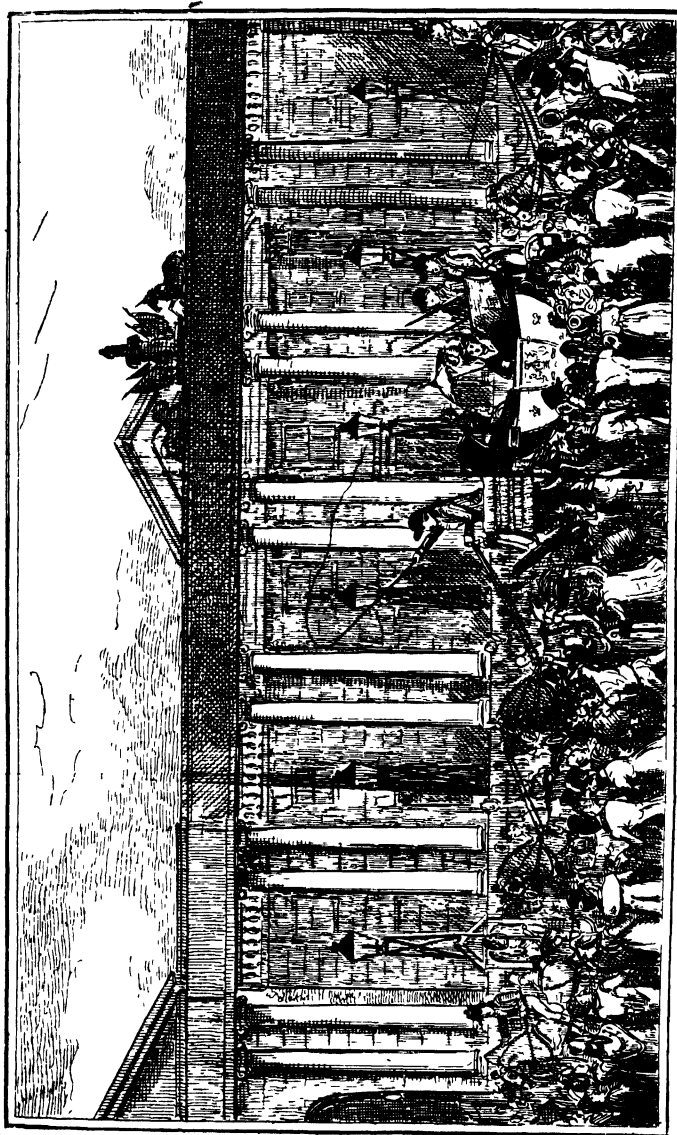
This decision, needless to say, left the position of the Princess unaltered. But the struggle between the contending parties, now transferred to Parliament, still went on with unabated vigour. Public excitement increased; and so did the irritation of the Regent. Ministers were in a situation of delicacy and difficulty. Early in March, Caroline sent letters of protest to the Lord Chancellor and the Speaker of the House of Commons stating that as she learned that the Privy Council had been considering a case against her behind closed doors, and had been given no opportunity of offering evidence in her own defence, she asked for a full investigation and said "that her only desire is

that she may be treated as innocent or proved to be guilty."

The Lord Chancellor, afraid of offending the Regent, returned the letter to the Princess advising her that from considerations of propriety and safety it would be prudent not to make it public. The Speaker of the House of Commons informed the House that he had received the letter and asked if he should read it. Members, eager to gain further details of the Royal scandal, clamoured for the letter. The Speaker read it much to the alarm of the Regent and the annoyance of ministers. Lord Castlereagh was sent off post-haste to the Speaker to censure him severely for making the letter public, whilst the Regent threatened to send a letter to the House of Commons on the subject.

The Regent also roundly abused the members of the Government. He severely lectured Castlereagh because no effective answer had been made to Canning's declaration that the report of 1807 conveyed a "complete, satisfactory and unlimited acquittal." He also visited his wrath on the Chancellor, who plaintively complained. "The Prince," he said, "has been treating me with so much unkindness because I won't do to his wife and daughter as he wishes." Other ministers found him equally intractable and difficult to please.

The Regent, however, had other agents more useful and pliable even than the politicians. His understrapper MacMahon, already mentioned, was busily engaged in bribing the Press. Another, Bate-Dudley, a clergyman, enjoyed the special favour of the Regent. This shepherd of souls, some of whose exploits have already been told, in addition to editing a newspaper, found his recreations in duelling, tavern-brawling,



*[From an old print]*

THE QUEEN'S DRIVE TO WESTMINSTER





and hard drinking. To him was allotted the task of launching a new flood of libels against the Princess in the Carlton House papers. This he did so thoroughly as to astonish and disgust the public, who were regaled with the more disgusting details of the evidence given during the delicate investigations years before.

A full-dress debate in the House of Commons followed. Whitbread stated Caroline's case with remarkable fire and eloquence. He pointed out that in common justice either Lady Douglas should be prosecuted for perjury or the Princess brought to trial. Castlereagh had stated that the public mind should not be poisoned by a consideration of such indelicate matters. This plea excited Whitbread's derision. Was not the minister aware, he asked, that the newspapers were filled with nauseous matter tending to libel the Princess? It was the fact that the papers controlled by or supporting the Regent were printing the foulest accusations, and that the Prince's backstair agents had attempted to bribe the editors of other papers.

Other speeches were equally strong in tone, and one member, Lord Milton, had some very unpleasant things to say about the Prince's character, and accused him of causing the publication of the evidence. "Let me," he concluded, "advise persons in high station to beware how they trifle with the feelings of the public."

Another consequence of the publication of the evidence against the Princess was that her friends now felt it their duty to publish the whole of the evidence. This was printed on the 13th and 15th of March in the *Morning Herald*. It was afterwards collected and published as *The Book*.

Now for the first time all the evidence given before the Royal Commission was available, and the people eager to secure a confection so highly spiced besieged the bookseller's shop for it. Edition after edition came from the presses, and were as quickly bought up by the public. *The Book* was the best seller of the year, and as its circulation grew so the tide of feeling in favour of Caroline rose higher and higher. The people constituted themselves judge and jury in this cause, and their verdict was unmistakably for the Princess. Throughout the month of March there were almost continuous debates on the subject, and the position of the Government became critical; Whitbread, greatly to his own surprise, became a popular hero, and his speeches were read and quoted everywhere. London was solidly for Caroline, and the City Corporation presented her with an address in which they congratulated her on her triumph over her slanderers. A large mob, assembled near Westminster Bridge on this occasion, wished to draw her carriage through the streets to Carlton House, but as Caroline strongly objected to such a demonstration, her enthusiastic supporters reluctantly allowed her to drive quietly home.

In this the Princess showed commendable moderation and good sense. It became evident, however, that her position in the country was growing stronger. Addresses of sympathy and loyal attachment from counties and towns reached her every day; but she would only consent to receive them privately as she had no desire to be associated with any public demonstration against the Regent.

Caroline's triumph, however, did not end here. The Regent's brothers, the Dukes of Sussex, Kent,

and Gloucester, who so long and studiously held aloof, now made a point of visiting her, and appearing in her company in public. Many of the nobility followed their example, and Caroline was welcomed in West End drawing-rooms to which she had long been a stranger.

It seemed indeed as if her triumph were complete. But the husband she wished to conciliate was not influenced in the slightest degree by the public sympathy shown for his wife, and the restrictions on the intercourse between mother and daughter were as rigidly enforced as ever. Writing to a friend towards the close of the year, Caroline said: "On November 5th it will be three months that I have not seen my daughter, though I receive almost every day a letter from her, yet the great caution that is necessary makes the intercourse difficult and most unpleasant."

While the desolate mother was thus moaning her loneliness, Creevey was giving his version of affairs to his wife.

"The Prince is exactly in the state one would wish; he lives only by the protection of his visitors. If he is caught alone nothing can equal the execration of the people who recognize him. *She*, the Princess, on the contrary, carries everything before her. . . . By the by, I called on her this morning, and saw very different names in her calling book from what I had ever seen before. Lord Rivers was the first name, Lady Burghersh the second, and so on, which you know is capital. All agree that the Prince will die or go mad. He is worn out with fuss, fatigue, and rage. He came to Lady Salisbury on Sunday from his own dinner beastly drunk, while her guests were all perfectly sober."

Can we wonder after these intimate glimpses of

the besotted Regent and his browbeaten wife, that the Prince's brother, the Duke of Sussex, thought it fitting and proper to propose the following toast :

“ Respectability to the Crown, durability to the Constitution, and independence to the People ! ”

## CHAPTER XI

### THE REGENT

“OUR friend will first forget our principles, and then our persons, and the sooner for having contracted debts to us. . . . Trust Sheridan as you would a jack-o’-lantern, Erskine as a quicksand, and Moira a mirage in the desert. These three friends have been his worst enemies. They have counter-acted all the good I might have done.”

So wrote Sir P. Francis of the Prince of Wales and his principal advisers when the Prince was appointed Regent.

Francis proved a truer prophet than his fellow-Whigs, though even he never expected that his master would desert the friends of a lifetime so quickly. The Whigs believed that at long last their moment had come. They had been in the dreary shades of Opposition for thirty years with only one brief and disastrous interlude of office, and they confidently expected that the Regent would at once dismiss the Tory ministers and instal them in power. For a week or two they were busy Cabinet-making. Though they knew something of the Prince they had not the slightest doubt of his devotion to Whig principles, and could not believe that he had merely made use of them to further his own ends.

But they were quickly undeceived and great was their resentment. In one of his letters Creevey

voiced their opinions of the lost leader. "The folly and villainy of this Prince is certainly beyond anything. . . . He who on his last birthday at Brighton declared to his numerous guests that it was his glory to have bred his daughter in the principles of Mr. Fox—he who in this very year declared by letter to Mr. Perceval and afterwards had the letter published as an apology for his conduct, that he took him as his father's minister, but that his heart was in another quarter—by God! this is too much."

Meanwhile, the Regent, heedless of the rage of disappointed politicians, assumed the duties of his new office with solemn ceremonial.

A great company assembled at Carlton House on the 5th of February to witness the swearing-in of the Regent. The Royal Dukes were present in full muster, as well as the Privy Councillors. After a long delay the Prince walked in preceded by the officers of his household, amongst whom were Lord Moira and Hutchinson, together with the faithful but erratic Sheridan and the notorious MacMahon.

As soon as the Prince had seated himself at the top of the table in the audience chamber, the proceedings began. Selecting some papers from the documents before him the Prince with edifying solemnity handed to the Lord President a certificate of his having received the sacrament of the Lord's Supper on the previous Sunday at the Chapel Royal. When this document had been countersigned with other certificates, the Lord President approached the Regent and made the customary obeisance. The rest of the company, headed by the Royal Dukes and the Archbishop of Canterbury, afterwards advanced to the chair according to the order they sat at the long table.

Next the Regent subscribed the declaration given in an old Act of Parliament entitled "An Act for the more Effectual Preserving of the King's Person, and Government by Disabling Papists from sitting in Either House of Parliament." This declaration the Prince repeated audibly and subscribed.

Another circumstance connected with the ceremonial deserves mention. At the head of the room prominently displayed were the busts of Fox and the Duke of Bedford. To the ministers present these appeared as omens of disaster, particularly so when they noticed the Prince's marked rudeness to Perceval, the Prime Minister.

"Joy!" said Lord Harrowby. "How can I feel it?" We have to do with a man who hates us, and only wishes to turn us out."

These fears of the Tory ministers were, as the event proved, unjustified. He did not love them, nor did they trust him. But to the Regent they were the lesser of two evils, and though Perceval and his friends knew it not, he had decided to cast in his lot with them in the future.

After the slights and humiliations of former days, the Regent now found himself in a position of unchallenged authority. He was King in all but name. His relatives were his subjects; ministers of State his vassals. Where once he had asked, now he commanded. The power he enjoyed went to his head like new wine. Throned in state he was childishly eager to display his magnificence to the world.

His solemn investiture as Regent did not satisfy his love of display, and he resolved to give a gala that would eclipse in grandeur anything that had ever been seen.

This fête was given at Carlton House on June 19th.



Some who attended it described it fifty years later as the most magnificent party they had ever attended.

Among the guests were King Louis XVIII of France, who was accompanied by the Prince of Condé, Duc de Bourbon, and Duc de Berri. The Regent received them in an apartment decorated with rich blue silk, parseme with fleur-de-lis in gold.

The exiled monarch refused for a time to sit down. But the Prince was insistent, and placing a chair for him remarked, "*Ici votre Majesté est Roi de France.*"

More than two thousand guests assembled to pay homage to the rising star, but the banquet was as notable because of those who did not attend, as for those who were there.

The Queen and Princesses refused to leave the sick-bed of the King to join this ill-timed merrymaking, and regarded the Prince's conduct in giving the party as heartless and indecent.

No surprise was felt that neither the Princess Caroline nor her daughter Charlotte was invited, but the absence of the Regent's other wife excited much speculation, and the guests airily asked each other why the two wives were sitting at home. Mrs. Fitzherbert herself explains the reason for her absence :

"Upon all former occasions," she says, "to avoid etiquette in circumstances of such delicacy, it had been customary to sit at table without regard to rank. Upon the present occasion this plan was to be altered, and I was informed through friends at Court that at the Royal table the individuals invited were to sit according to their rank."

When Mrs. Fitzherbert heard of this, she asked the Prince, who had personally invited her, where she was to sit.

To this the Prince replied : " You know, Madam, you have no place."

" None, sir," she replied, " but such as you choose to give me."

With this brief but significant conversation ended the connection between the Prince and his first wife.

Mrs. Fitzherbert declined the invitation to the gala, and informed the Royal Family of this. When he learned the reason, the Duke of York endeavoured to get the arrangements of the Royal table altered so that Mrs. Fitzherbert would not be humiliated by attending. But the Prince was not to be moved. He was now on with the new love, and it was high time to get rid of the old.

The new mistress was Lady Hertford, one of the great dames of London society, whose parties in Manchester Square were famous. The Regent also extended his favour to her son " Red Herrings " Yarmouth, who was constantly at his beck and call and carried out many of his secret commissions. It can scarcely be credited that at this age his relations with this lady were other than platonic, but he was none the less infatuated with her, and completely under her influence. According to Romilly—a trustworthy witness—he visited Manchester Square daily when in London ; and wherever he went Lady Hertford was at his elbow. Political observers were quick to note that she was the real power behind the throne, and that it was by her advice the Regent retained his Tory ministers and dismissed Mrs. Fitzherbert. Soon the fact that the country's affairs were directed from Hertford House became public property and the comments of the wits and scribes were piquant if not edifying.

In his well-known "Parody of a Celebrated Letter," Moore, the Irish poet, makes allusion to this connection. The parody is of a letter sent by the Regent to his brother the Duke of York :

"I meant before now to have sent you this letter,  
But Yarmouth and I thought perhaps 'twould be better  
To wait till the Irish affairs were decided—  
That is, till both Houses had prosed and divided,  
With all due appearance of thought and digestion—  
For, though Hertford House has long settled the question,  
I thought it but decent, between me and you,  
That the two *other* Houses should settle it too.  
And it pleased me to find at the house which, you know  
There's such good mutton cutlets and strong curaçoa,  
That the Marchioness called me a dutious old boy,  
And my Yarmouth's red whiskers grew redder for joy ! "

Allusions to the influence of Lady Hertford were made in both Houses of Parliament, and these were frequent and pointed. Outside, comment was less restrained. In the theatres references made to female influence, and promises made by the Prince of Wales, were received with loud applause ; while on his infrequent public appearances, the Regent met the stare of sullen and silent crowds. He refused an invitation for the Lord Mayor's banquet, as he did not wish to run the risk of being hissed in passing through the City.

But the Hertford connection was not alone responsible for the Regent's unpopularity. The great war, which was draining the life-blood of the nation, had still three years to run, and there was much public distress.

The people were underfed, overtaxed, and em-

bittered with disappointment. They expected that the advent of the Regent would have brought a change of Government, and that the Tory ministers who had ruled the roost so long would be sent to cool their heels in the shades of Opposition. The Prince all his life had been a fervent advocate of Whig principles. Now, he had shown, as so often before, that his word could not be trusted, and his promises were less substantial than the thinnest of pie-crust. But his profligacy and extravagance amid the general distress were the sharpest goads of all, and provoked an avalanche of furious criticism. Lampoons, pamphlets, and caricatures abusing the Regent poured from the presses, and the most brilliant writers of the time aimed their most venomous shafts at him. Byron, Moore, Charles Lamb, the Hunt brothers, Cruickshank and others held him up to the unseemly mirth of the multitude, and so exasperated him that he instructed Lord Sidmouth to prosecute offenders with merciless severity. Many prosecutions followed, and the Regent, inflamed almost to madness by the stings of his assailants, urged Sidmouth to greater activity, so that the number of prosecutions by the Government grew enormously, and the picture drawn by Moore of the Prince's breakfast-table :

“ The table spread with tea and toast,  
Death-warrants and the *Morning Post*,”

had a firmer basis of truth than the average caricature. Among those marked down for punishment were Leigh Hunt (the original of Dickens's Harold Skimpole) and his brother, who were then editing the *Examiner*.

Whatever his personal shortcomings, Leigh Hunt

was one of the ablest, if not the greatest literary critic of his time, and posterity has found but few occasions to modify or amend his judgments on the writers whose books he reviewed. But his political articles do not rise above the level of the Court scribes who belauded the Regent and attacked his enemies with virulence and lack of restraint. In the *Examiner* of March 22nd, 1812, appeared the following article on the Regent which may be taken as an average specimen of the political journalistic style a century ago :

“What person unacquainted with the true state of the case, would imagine in reading these astonishing eulogies that this Glory of the People was the subject of millions of stings and reproaches ! That this Protector of the Arts had named a wretched foreigner his historical painter, in disparagement or in ignorance of the merits of his countrymen ! That this Mæcenas of the age patronized not a single deserving writer ! That this Breather of Eloquence could not say a few decent extempore words, if we are to judge at last from what he said to his regiment on its embarkation for Portugal ! That this Conqueror of Hearts was the disappointer of hopes ! That this Exciter of Desire (Bravo, messieurs of the *Morning Post*), this Adonis in Loveliness was a corpulent gentleman of fifty ! In short, that this delightful, blissful, wise, pleasurable, honourable, virtuous, true, and immortal Prince was a violator of his word, a libertine, over head and ears in debt and disgrace, a despiser of domestic ties, a companion of gamblers and demireps, a man who has just closed half a century without one single claim on the gratitude of his country or the respect of posterity ! ”

For this libel the brothers Hunt were committed

for trial. The case excited enormous popular interest and the court when it was heard was crowded with friends and supporters of the defendants. The judge was Lord Ellenborough and the Hunts were defended by Brougham, who made an eloquent plea for the brothers, and urged that the article was more truthful and sincere than the eulogies of the Prince to which it was a reply. The Hunts were sentenced to a fine and a term of imprisonment. Leigh Hunt bore his punishment with equanimity. He was visited in prison by many distinguished people, and many of his literary friends helped him by carrying on the *Examiner* during his imprisonment. Among these was the gentle Elia, whose long poem "The Triumph of the Whale" appeared in the *Examiner* shortly after the trial. The following extract gives the reader some idea of its style and sentiment :

"Io ! Pæan ! Io ! sing,  
To the finny people's King !  
Not a mightier whale than this,  
In the vast Atlantic is ;  
Not a fatter fish than he,  
Flounders round the Polar Sea :  
See his blubber at his gills,  
What a world of drink he swills !  
Such his person—next declare,  
Muse ! who his companions are :  
Every fish of generous kind,  
Stands aside or slinks behind.  
Name or title, what has he ?  
Is he Regent of the sea ?  
By his bulk and by his size,  
By his oily qualities  
This (or else my eyesight fails)  
This should be the Prince of Whales."

The Prince had now no real friends. At the bidding of Lady Hertford he dismissed Sheridan and Moira. Sheridan, the most brilliant orator and greatest dramatist of his time, who had served him disinterestedly since he came to manhood, and earned obloquy and abuse as his master's advocate in Parliament, was thrown aside like an old coat, and allowed to sink into poverty and neglect. Moore in his biography of Sheridan says that after his rejection at Stafford, the Regent "offered to bring him into Parliament, but the thought of returning to that scene of his triumphs and his freedom, with his owner's mark, as it were, upon him, was more than he could bear and he declined the offer." It is difficult to see how he could have acted otherwise. Sheridan had been one of the leaders of the Whig party, and as the Prince's ministers were now Tories his position in Parliament as his master's nominee would have been impossible and could only have added to the sum of humiliation already recklessly incurred in forwarding the Prince's interests.

Now,—to his honour be it said,—he chose the better part and preferred the alternative of arrest and imprisonment for debt to the dubious honour of wearing the Prince's livery. It was said that when Sheridan was dying an agent of the Prince sent him £200 to provide for his immediate comforts, but that this gift was declined and returned.

Moore discredits this story, and cannot believe "that so scanty and reluctant a benefaction was the sole mark of attention accorded by a gracious Prince and master to the last death-bed wants of one of the most accomplished and faithful servants that Royalty ever yet raised or ruined by its smiles."

The breach between the Prince and Lord Moira is inexplicable. For many years Moira had acted as the Prince's agent in those underground negotiations of which the Prince was so fond, and had discharged his duties to the complete satisfaction of his master. He had been, until the advent of Lady Hertford, the Prince's confidential adviser and friend, and was always a welcome visitor at Carlton House. Then one evening when he called there by the Prince's order, he received a shock. The Prince sent out his page to tell him that he had been so drunk the previous night that he was not well enough to see him. From this incident a coolness arose, and for a time Lord Moira stayed away.

Then followed a reconciliation. Moira was invited to Carlton House, and an affecting interview followed. The Prince wept,—as he had wept over a waistcoat,—and hung upon Moira's neck while tears streamed down his face. These endearments continued for a day or two, Moira was the dearest and faithfullest of friends,—he knew the Prince's difficulties,—he needed a new Government,—old and new friends must be reconciled,—Moira must form a Government to replace Perceval's.

But the Prince, busily engaged in throwing dust in the eyes of the Whig nobles, had already decided to carry on with the Tory ministers, and Moira's task was an impossible one. Grenville wrote: "As long ago as Sunday se'nnight Lord Hertford told old Sloane that he would insure to him the continuance of the old Government; and early on Sunday a great prelate, a friend of mine, remarking to the Duke of Cumberland that Moira was said to have completed his Government, was answered, 'Do not be such a fool



as to believe him—it is to be the old Government again.’ ”

The next scene in this little drama was set in the Prince’s private room at Carlton House, where Moira had been summoned to an interview.

“ Have you made an administration ? ” asked the Regent.

“ I am making one,” said Moira.

“ Then,” retorted the Regent, “ the country requires an immediate Government, and I shall retain the present people in their places.”

Moira gazed at the Prince in astonishment for a moment, then without a word, bowed and retired.

The next day he received an offer of the Garter which he accepted. The same week he attended the levee and was installed. So ended his connection with the Prince. On the day following the Prince gave a great dinner to his intimate friends, but to this Moira was not invited.

The exchange of old friends for new was completed when Lord Yarmouth took the place of the departed Moira.

Though he had attained an age when the majority of men learn the value of moderation, the Prince was still in his element at convivial gatherings. But his health was not good, and he could no longer, as in earlier days, drink with impunity.

In the autumn of 1813 a fête was given at the New Military College of Sandhurst which the whole Royal Family attended. When she was leaving, the Queen asked for the Regent, but he was nowhere to be found. Later it was discovered that he, with the Duke of York, the Prince of Orange, and other illustrious visitors were under the table.

Again we catch a glimpse of him at Belvoir Castle in January 1814, where the birth and baptism of an heir was the occasion of much festivity. Here the Regent set the pace, and had such a giddy time, that for a week or two he became seriously ill and at one period his life was thought to be in danger.

Once amid the busy round of his social engagements he found time to visit his father at Windsor. The occasion was one which the Court eulogists could not fail to improve, and the Prince's organ told a wondering posterity that the visit "proved him susceptible of the finest feelings, and that he could and did regard the duties of a son. The filial affection by which the Prince Regent has been distinguished will ever be remembered to his honour, and will be more than sufficient to counteract the base calumnies of all the foul-mouthed revilers of dignities."

As the Prince entered his father's room, the aged man was lamenting his blindness in Milton's lines.—

"Oh, dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon."

The sight of the white locks and bowed shoulders, and the sound of his quavering voice as the King moaned his lament, were too much for the Prince, and he burst into a flood of tears and left the room.

If this scene brought to the Regent's mind any glimpse of the truth in Shirley's lines :

"The glories of our blood and state  
Are shadows, not substantial things,"

he gave no sign of it. He was as eager as ever to

gratify his taste for pageants and entertainments and parade his magnificence.

For this the visit of the Allied Sovereigns, after the fall of Buonaparte in 1814, provided an unparalleled opportunity, and the Prince was in the highest spirits.

When the Czar, the King of Prussia, and other grandees arrived on June 8th, London went mad with enthusiasm and the visitors were overwhelmed with the warmth of their reception. Fêtes, balls, banquets, and State visits to the Opera followed each other in rapid succession. Napoleon had been banished; the long and ruinous war was over, and the people were transported with joy at the prospect of a long peace. Nearly everyone was in high good-humour, but for the Regent there was not much enjoyment in this unique gathering.

Wherever they went the Royal visitors were received with cheers and cries of welcome. Groans and hisses were reserved for the Regent, who must have been mortified by these demonstrations in the presence of his guests. As the Czar and the Regent were on their way to the Guildhall, a man put his head into the carriage and shouted, "Where's your wife?" The Regent neatly deflected the shaft. Turning to the Czar he remarked in tones of good-humoured banter, "Emperor, that's for you!"

But the visiting rulers were left in no doubt about the attitude of the populace. At the Opera, which the Princess attended, the Regent was placed between the Emperor and the King of Prussia. When his wife entered the Prince was standing and applauding Grassina. As soon as the air was ended everyone in the pit turned and applauded the Princess. Her ladies-in-waiting begged her to rise and make a curtsy,

but she refused, remarking, "I know my business better than to take the morsel out of my husband's mouth ; I am not to seem to know that the applause is meant for me till they call me by name." The prudence of the Princess was justified, for a moment later the Prince, taking the applause to himself, stood up and bowed to the audience.

But the real feelings of the people were shown at the end of the performance. As soon as the Prince and his friends left the Royal box the audience called for the Princess and cheered her enthusiastically, which she acknowledged with curtsies. Outside Carlton House when driving home the Princess's carriage was surrounded by a crowd. They opened the carriage doors, and some of the bolder spirits insisted on shaking hands with her, and were obliging enough to ask if they should burn down Carlton House.

For a moment or two the Princess was seriously alarmed, but she succeeded in pacifying her too enthusiastic supporters. "Let me pass, good people, and go home to your beds."

When the Princess went to Drury Lane Theatre a few nights later a more significant demonstration took place. Towards the end of the play a man in one of the higher boxes stood up and announced to the audience that they were honoured with the presence of H.R.H. the Princess of Wales and called for three cheers. The house heartily responded to this demand and then sang the National Anthem. But the Princess's self-appointed champion was not yet satisfied. He next asked for "three cheers for an oppressed Princess, who should go to Court," and at this there was more enthusiasm.

The quarrel between the Prince and his wife which

had long been smouldering began to burn fiercely again. On May 23rd, 1814, just before the Royal visitors arrived, the Queen sent the following letter to the Princess of Wales :

“ The Queen considers it to be her duty to lose no time in acquainting the Princess of Wales that she has received a communication from her son, the Prince Regent, in which he states that Her Majesty’s intention of holding two Drawing-rooms in the ensuing month having been notified to the public, he must declare that he considers that his own presence at her Court cannot be dispensed with ; and that he desires it to be understood, for reasons of which he alone can be the judge, to be his fixed and unalterable determination not to meet the Princess of Wales upon any occasion, either in public or private. The Queen is thus placed under the painful necessity of intimating to the Princess of Wales the impossibility of Her Majesty receiving Her Royal Highness at the Drawing-rooms.

CHARLOTTE R.”

The Princess regarded this missive as a declaration of war, and was prepared to fight for her Royal privileges, but Whitbread, one of the leaders of the Radical “ Mountains ” which had taken up her cause, persuaded her to send a humble letter of submission which he had prepared.

Whitbread’s friends were upset by this letter. Brougham, ever a bold tactician, saw that a heaven-sent chance had been missed. The Princess ought, he declared, to have braved the Queen’s veto and gone to Court. He also regarded the phrase in the Queen’s letter, “ his fixed and unalterable determination not to

meet the Princess of Wales upon any occasion, either *in public or private*," as tantamount to a declaration that the Queen should not be crowned.

Creevey was equally emphatic. When Whitbread showed him the letter he remarked bluntly, "You have cut her throat."

After much anxious consultation the perturbed Radical leaders waited on the Princess, who was bored and bewildered by these petty party manœuvres, and suggested she should write a letter to the Prince asking him to state why she was excluded from Court.

The Princess agreed to this, and wrote a spirited letter of protest. "I have been declared innocent," she said, "and will not submit to be treated as guilty. Sir, Your Royal Highness may positively refuse to read this letter; but the world must know that I have written it, and they will see my real motive for forgoing in this instance, the rights of my rank. Occasions, however, may arise (one, I trust, is far distant) when I must appear in public, and Your Royal Highness must be present also. . . . Sir, the time you have selected for this proceeding is calculated to make it peculiarly galling. Many illustrious strangers are already arrived in England. This season Your Royal Highness has chosen for treating me with fresh and unprovoked indignity; and of all His Majesty's subjects I alone am prevented from appearing in my place to partake of the general joy; and am deprived of the indulgence in those feelings of pride and affection permitted to every mother but me."

The Prince's persecution of his wife went on with relentless severity. The committee of White's Club decided to give a magnificent entertainment to the visiting Sovereigns. The Duke of Devonshire was

approached, and he agreed to lend his house and gardens in Piccadilly for the purpose. The preparations were far advanced, and some fine trees in the grounds had been cut down to facilitate the arrangement of pavilions. Then one day, when the committee was sitting, a message came from a great person to the committee, asking the kind of company they meant to invite to their ball. The committee fully understood what this inquiry meant, so they sent an answer requesting the Regent himself to invite all the Royalties whom he wished should be there, and at the same time stated that they would send him a number of tickets for that purpose.

But the Regent and his Hertford House advisers were not satisfied that these precautions were sufficient to keep out the obnoxious person. One member, believed to be Lord Yarmouth, proposed a motion that no member should give away his tickets except to his relations. Similar suggestions were put forward by some other friends of the Prince. This was too much for Lord Sefton, who got up and in a candid speech said that it was easy to see these confused proposals were meant to exclude the Princess of Wales. He went on to say that as one of the members, every ticket he subscribed for was his own, and every one of them he intended to send to the Princess, to be disposed of as she pleased. Other peers said they would take the same course. There ensued a general wrangle, and finally it was decided by the majority that as they could not dispose of tickets according to their own wishes, they would give no ball at all.

The Regent had always disliked Lord Sefton. After this debate his feelings towards that gay and witty nobleman deepened into enmity.

Despised by his courtiers, distrusted by ministers, hated by the Opposition, and detested by the people, the Regent was at this period the most unpopular ruler in Christendom. He was the target for every missile, and living as he did in the pitiless glare of publicity, he was responsible in the popular view for all that went amiss. The bungling of ministers at home, the mismanagement of the war abroad, the restrictions on foreign trade, the continuance of disabilities on Roman Catholics, and the high prices of food, were all charged to his account. Even his most innocent actions were misinterpreted, and served as excuses for further abuse. The visit paid by the Regent to the chapel at Windsor when the coffin which held the remains of Charles I was opened evoked the following outrageous attack by Lord Byron. "On the Prince Regent being seen standing between the coffins of Charles I and Henry VIII":

"Famed for contemptuous breach of sacred ties,  
By headless Charles see heartless Harry lies ;  
Between them stands another sceptred thing,  
It moves, it reigns, in all but name a King.  
Charles to his people, Harry to his wife,  
In him the double tyrant wakes to life.  
Justice and death have mixed their dust in vain ;  
Each royal vampire wakes to live again.  
Oh, what can touch avail, since these disgorge  
The blood and dust of both to mould a George."

More ominous than the attacks of the poets and wits were the frequent inscriptions on the walls of Carlton House, "*Bread, or the Regent's Head.*" One morning the Royal Household were thrown into a



panic, when a loaf steeped in blood was left on the parapet at the Regent's residence.

But in June 1815 when Napoleon made his last desperate throw at Waterloo, the Regent enjoyed a brief respite, and his misdeeds were forgotten in popular rejoicing. Just as the order for the advance to Waterloo had been given at the Duchess of Richmond's ball at Brussels, so the official news of the victory was given first at Mrs. Boehm's ball in St. James's Square.

It was a close and oppressive evening. A brilliant company were assembled in the magnificent ballroom, including the Regent and his brothers. The windows had been left wide open because of the heat. Just as the first quadrilles was being formed, and the Regent was walking up to the dais, there arose an uproar in the square. The noise was so loud and continuous that the music ceased and the dance was stopped. As by a common impulse the guests threw decorum aside and rushed to the windows. Outside was an enormous mob which had just entered the square and were running beside a post-chaise and four, out of whose windows were hanging three French eagles.

As the carriage stopped before Mrs. Boehm's house, the door was flung open, and an officer, wearing a stained and dusty uniform, and carrying a flag in each hand, sprang out, and pushing the on-lookers out of the way dashed upstairs into the ballroom. Heedless of the spectators, the intruder strode up to the Regent, dropped to one knee, laid the flags at his feet and exclaimed, "Victory, sir, Victory!" The Regent was greatly overcome, and could only utter a few broken words of thanks when the young officer handed him the despatches. These he took into an adjoining room to read privately. Presently

he returned and addressing the assembled guests said, "It is a glorious victory, and we must rejoice at it, but the loss of life has been fearful, and I have lost many friends." As he spoke, says an eyewitness, tears were rolling down his cheeks, and he was evidently labouring under deep emotion. He then sent for his carriage and left the house. His brothers followed his example and a quarter of an hour later the hostess was left alone in her ballroom, while in an adjoining room the splendid supper remained untouched.

Scarcely had the national rejoicing over the end of the war subsided than the subject of the Prince's debts once more engrossed public attention. It was a question of which Parliament and people were heartily tired, as they were wearied of his promises of retrenchment and economy. But the matter was urgent and had to be faced. Parliament debated it with solemn gravity, and found it an inopportune and unpleasant business. But this time the political parties were on different sides. On previous occasions when this subject had arisen the Whigs had been the Prince's apologists. Now they were the attacking force, while the Tories had the thankless task of defending him and justifying his eccentric habits of spending money. In the course of the first debate Tierney disclosed the fact that a sum of £100,000 granted to the Prince by Perceval's Government as an "outfit" when entering on the Regency had been used for paying debts. Radical orators also made some startling revelations of extravagance which caused great indignation. As usual Carlton House had swallowed much of this money, and one Opposition member in contrasting the prodigality of the Regent with the

poverty of those who paid for the luxury he enjoyed, pointed out that in three years £160,000 had been spent on new furniture for Carlton House, and that the account for silver in the same period amounted to no less than £130,000.

Lord Castlereagh made a sturdy but ineffectual effort to defend the Regent. He pointed out that the entertainment of the Royalties in 1814 had cost a considerable sum which had been defrayed by the Prince. But he admitted that when every allowance had been made the Prince had exceeded his income of the past three years by £100,000, and that the total of his undischarged liabilities amounted to £339,000.

The minister's defence provoked a storm of criticism both inside and outside the House. In an address to the Regent on the occasion of his daughter's marriage, the London City Council instead of indulging in the usual language of fulsome compliment seized the occasion to read the Regent a severe lecture on the need for retrenchment. They alluded to the "enormous sums paid for unmerited pensions and sinecures," pointed out the folly of maintaining "an unconstitutional and unnecessary military force in time of peace," and explained that this and other evils which they mentioned arose "from the inadequate and corrupt state of the representation."

The Prince plainly showed the members of the Court of Common Council that he regarded this address as an impertinence. A witness of the ceremony speaks of the "rude sulkiness of manner with which he replied to the address as ungracious and unwarrantable." After reading his answer the Regent turned his back on his auditors without allowing them to kiss his hand, as was customary on such occasions.

Brougham also chose this occasion to indulge his love of invective by making a terrific onslaught on the Regent in the House of Commons, in which he spoke of him as the worst ruler England had had since the days of James II.

Ministers who watched the signs of public discontent with growing alarm at last became "panicky," and Lord Liverpool, voicing the opinion of his colleagues, wrote to the Regent urging him to return from Brighton.

"Lord Liverpool to Sir R. Bloomfield.  
(Secret).

Under these circumstances both Lord Castlereagh and myself are of opinion that it is of the utmost importance that the Prince Regent should come to town the very first moment he can do it without risk. The country is indeed in a state in which his ministers ought to have the opportunity of daily, and even hourly, access to him. Decisions which ought not to be taken without His Royal Highness's concurrence, must at times like these often be taken without the possibility of the delay which would arise in consequence of a communication between London and Brighton."

The Prince replied himself to this warning. After referring to "the present storm which rages," he assured the Premier of "my most resolute, firm and persevering support." Then he adds, "you have seen me before pretty highly tried, and you shall find me now, as at all other times, true to the backbone."

## CHAPTER XII

### THE WOOING OF PRINCESS CHARLOTTE

AS soon as his daughter was of age the Regent repeatedly expressed his desire to see her married and settled, and he had a suitor in view whom he thought would please her. This was the Prince of Orange, whose father had just got back his dominions. Sir Henry Halford was instructed to mention the matter to Charlotte, and Lady Anne Smith in a diplomatic way endeavoured to interest her in the young man.

The Prince of Orange was on Lord Wellington's staff, and when he came back to England with despatches the Regent broached the subject to him, and promised his help and blessing. But the young Princess was shy and avoided meeting the suitor. A month or two later, however, Sir Henry Halford was able to assure the Regent that his daughter was favourably disposed to the match, and had been heard to say that the Prince was adored in the Army and highly thought of by Lord Wellington. At a dinner-party at Carlton House she was shown a print of the young man, and remarked with maidenly reticence that it was "not very ugly."

All this put the Regent in high good-humour. He was eager to have Charlotte off his hands. She was a wayward, strong-willed girl, difficult to manage, and bore him no affection. Her marriage would rid him of a disagreeable responsibility. Moreover, it would

separate her from her mother with whom she had worked in alliance for the past year or two.

The Regent played the proud father, eager for his daughter's happiness, to perfection. He gave his daughter some valuable jewels and jocularly hinted that she would shortly receive some more from another quarter that she would value even more highly. Then he arranged another dinner-party at Carlton House, at which she was to meet the Prince of Orange for the first time.

The young people behaved as young couples always do at a first meeting. The Princess, dressed in violet satin and blonde lace, was much agitated. The Prince, manly and soldier-like in his smart uniform, was perceptibly nervous. He regarded her as beautiful and charming. She thought him strong and handsome. When the Princess told her suitor that he was by no means "so disagreeable as she had expected," the Regent smiled and at once took them into another room where they strolled about together.

After dinner the Regent led his daughter into another room. "Well," he asked anxiously, "what is your verdict? It will not do?"

"I don't say that. I like his manners very well so far," she replied. The Prince was delighted.

Two days later the Regent and the Prince of Orange made a ceremonious call on the Princess. The lovers withdrew to another room, while the Regent remained with Miss Knight, the companion of the Princess. But the conversation of the young couple was not a happy one. The Prince said that he expected and wished her to live in Holland, that she would have a home here and there, and be constantly coming backwards and forwards.

The thought of leaving home was too much for the Princess and she burst into a violent fit of hysterical weeping, and hurried to her room. But this difficulty was finally overcome, and Charlotte accepted the Prince's terms. Though no formal announcement was made, the marriage was for a time regarded as definitely settled.

In March 1814 a Dutch envoy arrived in London with the formal proposal of marriage from the Dutch Court. He brought with him a portrait of the Prince, together with a sum of £14,000 for the purchase of jewels. But when the Princess asked her father and the young Prince what establishment she would have in Holland and at home she could gain no information. Nor would they tell her the terms of the marriage contract.

She was disappointed and offended and resented being treated as a child. If she was old enough to be married, she was old enough to be freed from the seclusion of the schoolroom. The humblest woman in the land had the right to know the terms of a treaty she was bound in honour to observe. Why was this elementary right denied to the future Queen of England?

Moreover, as she knew the Prince of Orange better, she began to like him less. She disliked his rough humour, coarseness, and lack of refinement. She also suspected his candour and good faith, and began to understand that he and her father were conspiring to hurry on the marriage and get her out of the country.

This she was determined to resist at whatever cost. She demanded a pledge that she should not be compelled to live in Holland. This was refused. Shortly afterwards she announced that she had broken off

the engagement, which she declared was "as much brought about by *force* as anything, and by deceit and hurry."

The sequel may be imagined. Her father was almost beside himself with anger; her lover bitterly disappointed at losing such an advantageous alliance, while the Queen and the rest of the Royal Family were greatly annoyed. Extreme pressure was put upon her to alter her decision. The Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, was called in to plead with her; the Duke of York used the soothing powers of persuasion; her father stormed and threatened,—but to no purpose. Her will triumphed over all. She informed the Opposition leaders of her decision so that the public should know the true state of affairs.

Finally, when the Prince of Orange departed in disgust the Regent summoned his daughter to Carlton House, and after bombarding her with scoldings and threats told her that her Household was dismissed, and that her new attendants were in the next room, waiting to take her to Cranborne Lodge at Windsor. Here, he reminded her grimly, she would be virtually a prisoner as she would see no visitors, nor receive letters.

Charlotte knew but too well what this meant. She had spent nearly all her life in subjection, and this last threat made her frantic. Asking leave to withdraw to her room she hastily seized a shawl and hat, hurried into the street, and tendering a guinea to a hackney coach driver, asked him to take her to Connaught Place where her mother was living. When she arrived, the Princess Caroline was not at home. But she was sent for, and when she arrived she was so agitated by the occurrence that she knew not what to



do. Messengers were sent out in hot haste to find those who could advise in this crisis. Soon an assemblage of distinguished and learned men assembled in the dining-room of Caroline's house, while mother and daughter sat upstairs, awaiting their decision.

Among those who debated Charlotte's position were the Lord Chief Justice, the Lord Chancellor, the Duke of York, and Brougham. They sat and argued until the night was half spent. It was apparent to all that the Regent was within his legal rights in deciding his daughter's domicile. It was equally clear that Caroline, without the authority and assistance of Parliament, could not protect her daughter from the Regent's tyranny; and that if the extreme step of appealing to the House of Commons was taken, it was possible in the state of public feeling that riot and even bloodshed might ensue. In the end Brougham was deputed to see the young Princess, and he told her that her flight and defiance of her father might have a very dangerous influence on public feeling, and she at last agreed—it was then three in the morning—to let the Duke of York take her back to Carlton House. Brougham afterwards said that when he told her that her father had the power to enforce his order legally, the effect on her was so great that he felt as if he was pronouncing the death-sentence on a prisoner.

The Regent showed her no mercy. She was at once packed off to Cranborne Lodge and watched and guarded like a prisoner. Her health gave way under the close confinement, and her doctor recommended sea-air, but no notice was taken by the Regent of this recommendation until some plain-spoken comments were published in the London Press. She

was then allowed to go to Weymouth. So for a year and a half this durance continued, without occupation, amusement or social intercourse. But at last came Prince Leopold of Saxe-Cobourg, who asked for the hand of the young Princess in marriage. The Regent eagerly gave his consent to this proposal, and Charlotte, who had met the young Prince before and liked him, accepted him without hesitation.

Leopold was neither wealthy, influential nor in any way brilliant. His little Principality had been swallowed up in the Napoleonic wars, in which he had taken part as a military attaché to the Czar. But he was ambitious, and if his wife had lived would have reached a pinnacle far beyond his dreams. The young couple were married at Carlton House on May 2nd, 1816. This ceremony was attended by Queen Charlotte, who before had bitterly upbraided her granddaughter for refusing to marry the Prince of Orange. Now she gave her a blessing.

For the first time in her life the young Princess tasted happiness. Bullied by her father, separated from her mother, her life had hitherto been spent in the company of guardians and governesses. At her home at Claremont, near Esher, she lived a retired, peaceful life. But this new experience was so strange to her that she had uneasy forebodings that such happiness could not last. These premonitions were fulfilled. She passed away on November 5th, 1817, in giving birth to a child that did not live. She was attended by the fashionable surgeon Croft, who was so much affected by his responsibility for this national disaster that he afterwards died by his own hand.

This event was the occasion of such sorrow and mourning as had not been known in England since

the death of Nelson at Trafalgar. Memorial services were held in every parish church in the country, and by people of all classes this dispensation of the Fates was felt as a private sorrow.

One of her last letters concerned her mother whom she had not seen for three years. A friend who had met the Princess of Wales on her travels in Italy wrote to Charlotte praising the loyalty and devotion of her mother's attendants. "I have it not in my power," she replied, "at present to repay any services to the Princess of Wales, but if ever I have, those who remain steadfast to her shall not be forgotten by me."

Byron fittingly expressed the nation's grief at the loss of the beloved Princess :

"Of sackcloth was thy wedding garment made,  
Thy bridal's fruit is ashes : in the dust  
The fair-haired daughter of the Isles is laid,  
The love of millions ! how we did entrust  
Futurity to her."

So much under the influence of the Regent were Lord Liverpool and his Government that no official notification of the death of her daughter was sent to the Princess of Wales ! Such callous indifference to the common dictates of humanity helps us to realize what pitiable toadies Liverpool and Castlereagh were.

The mob believed that Charlotte's life had been needlessly sacrificed and were furiously angry with the Regent and Queen Charlotte for their indifference and neglect. When the Princess passed away the Regent was at Hertford House and Queen Charlotte at Bath. When the Queen was about to return to Windsor she sent a letter to the City Council intimating that she wished to be received without ceremony. The

City Fathers who like everyone else were out of sympathy with her, shrugged their shoulders, and decided to take no notice of her arrival.

When she arrived at Temple Bar, escorted by the High Constable of Westminster, her coach was surrounded by a crowd of half-demented people who yelled savage threats and curses, and even threatened her with violence. Some of the mob tried to disarm the footmen, while others thrusting their heads into the carriage roughly asked, "What have you done with the Princess Charlotte?"

With the death of the Princess Charlotte the Royal line of Hanover seemed doomed to extinction. None of the Royal brothers had issue, and as four of them were unmarried, and some of them had contracted irregular unions, owing to the Royal Marriage Act there seemed little prospect of a direct heir to the throne. H.R.H. the Duke of Kent explained his own and his brothers' difficulties very frankly to Creevey, who, inquisitive as always, wished to know what would happen.

"My opinion is the Regent will not attempt a divorce. . . . Besides, the crime of adultery on her part must be proved in an English Court of Justice. . . . The Duke of Clarence demands payment of all his debts, which are very great, and a handsome provision for each of his ten natural children. Should the Duke of Clarence not marry, the next Prince in succession is myself. God only knows the sacrifice it will be whenever I shall think it my duty to become a married man. It is now seven-and-twenty years that Madame St. Laurent and I have lived together. . . ."

But whether he wished it or not, Parliament which viewed with alarm the prospect of a foreigner

on the throne, asked the Dukes of Clarence, Sussex, Kent and Cambridge to marry as soon as possible. All but the Duke of Sussex obligingly complied with this request.

Vastly to the relief of the Regent, the Princess of Wales embarked at Lancing on August 16th, 1814, for the Continent, where she proposed to stay indefinitely. The Prince drank a toast "to her damnation, and may she never return to England." Lady Hertford felt that an obstacle to her progress was removed. The friends of the Princess were afraid that now she had cast off the shackles imposed by her position in England, she might commit some act of imprudence that would deprive her of the sympathy of her supporters.

The Radical politicians were furious. For years they had used her as a whip with which to scourge the Regent and his ministers. For Caroline herself they cared nothing. Their only aim was to use her as a stepping-stone to power. "I have been dreadfully tormented by Whitbread and Brougham about my going abroad," wrote the Princess, and this was true. Brougham growled about her snapping eagerly at the cash, Whitbread and Creevey bleated about her "desertion," while the rest of the Party consoled themselves with the hope that she would return in the spring and enable them to indulge in the profitable amusement of baiting the Regent.

A few friends there were, their number insignificant, who sympathized with this poor woman in her desire to leave a country where she had led a tormented, miserable existence.

She embarked with an imposing suite which included Ladies Charlotte Lindsay and Elizabeth Farkes, Colonel

St. Leger, Sir William Gell, Keppel Craven, Captain Hesse, and Dr. Holland. The adopted child, Willie Austin, was also with her. Her first visit was to the Court of Brunswick, where she spent a fortnight in a hectic round of amusements. Her emancipation from restraint seems to have gone to her head, and her demands for new pleasures and excitements were inexhaustible. Balls, suppers, masquerades followed each other in rapid succession. She gave her suite no rest, and the inhabitants of the sleepy German town watched this hectic succession of gaities with popping eyes.

Her brother seized the occasion of this visit to borrow from her a considerable sum of money, which for reasons best known to himself he never repaid.

From Brunswick Caroline's coach was headed for Frankfort, from whence she passed to Strassburg, Berne, Lausanne, and Geneva. In the last town she enjoyed the society of other Royalties, the ex-Empress Marie Louise of Austria, and a Saxe-Coburg princess, with whom she engaged in many frivolities.

But the restless Princess did not stay long in any place, and in October she went on to Milan. Here three members of her suite left her, and, as no English people were available, she decided to replace them with Italian servants. She applied to some of her friends, and one of these, General Pino, an Austrian, recommended an Italian who had served with him—Bartholomo Bergami. General Pino spoke in the highest terms of this man, and stated that no more efficient courier for a lengthy tour could be obtained. He said further that Bergami bore an excellent character, and that though he followed a humble calling he was of gentle descent.

As this recommendation was endorsed by the Marquis Ghislieri, the man was engaged as courier. So began a connection that was to have as its sequel the trial of a Queen of England by the House of Lords.

It is unnecessary here to follow in detail the course of Caroline's wanderings in Europe and the Holy Land. These are fully dealt with in the account of the Trial which will be found in a succeeding chapter. The follies and extravagancies of the Princess in this feverish rush from place to place pained her friends, and lost her the sympathy of many who had stoutly supported her claims.

At Naples she was entertained with great honour by Joachim Murat during his brief spell of kingship ; and was effusively received at Rome by the Pope. But other Royalties were shyer. They had been warned by the Regent and the British Foreign Office to have nothing to do with her. Acting on this suggestion, the Regent's close ally, the Austrian Emperor, who then ruled the greater part of Italy, refused to receive Caroline, while the English ambassador in Vienna fled from the city when she sent a message that she was coming to stay with him. English travellers abroad anxious to keep on the right side in the dispute also avoided her company. As soon as she arrived in Geneva one of her friends was called upon to get up a ball in her honour. After some difficulty this was accomplished.

"But what was my horror," says Lady Charlotte Bury in her Diary, "when I beheld the poor Princess enter, dressed as Venus. I was, as she used to say, 'all over shock.' A more injudicious choice of costume could not be adopted. I was unfeignedly grieved to see her make herself so utterly ridiculous."

At a later date the same lady gave the Princess some excellent advice, and said :

“ For God’s sake, Madam, lose not the place you hold in the British people’s hearts by too long absence from them. Live abroad and be surrounded by foreign servitors, and I fear the English people’s affection will not stand the test of a long absence, or of your showing partiality to foreigners. If you are always under the public eye of the English nation, no lies can be invented injurious to your honour or happiness.”

But this and all other advice, Caroline ignored. Brougham gave the Regent a fright by serving him with a formal notice that the Princess of Wales would take up her residence at Kensington Palace, after she had stayed a winter abroad. But it was a needless alarm, for she had not the least intention of doing this. In England she had bitter foes, including the arch-enemy himself, and these had wrought her much misery and unhappiness. For a time at least she would be her own mistress. And so, like a truant child, she went her own way, appearing at Carlsruhe in the strangest of costumes, while her suite attired in Turkish dresses caused the phlegmatic Germans to gape with astonishment.

When travelling in Palestine in 1816 she founded a new order of Knighthood, making Bergami the Master of the Order of St. Caroline and investing Willie Austin and Baron della Francina as Knights. On her return from the East she took a villa on the banks of Lake Como, the Villa d’Este, where her festivities afforded English visitors much material for ill-natured gossip.

“ I really think the Princess is gone mad,” wrote an old acquaintance. “ I received a summons to visit



Her Royal Highness at Como, which I obeyed, I must own, rather reluctantly. The Princess looked ill, talked in a querulous and restless manner of wild projects, of living the rest of her life in the East, or in Greece. I asked her if she meant to return to England, upon which she shook her head and said, 'It chased me from its protection, and I will never do't de honour of setting my foot on its ground ; besides, my daughter is dead ; why should I return to a land where I should be treated worse than a stranger ? ' "

Meanwhile, in England the Regent was urging his ministers to assist him in obtaining a divorce from Caroline. This they refused to consider, but they were willing to assist him in obtaining evidence against her. From the moment she left England Caroline's footsteps were dogged by spies and secret service agents. They pried into her household affairs, bribed her servants, and tampered with her correspondence. In all embassies abroad diplomatists were instructed to report anything they knew or heard to the detriment of the Princess. In 1816 the ambassador in Vienna, Sir Charles Stewart, the brother of Lord Castlereagh, was charged with the duty of collecting evidence against her. Castlereagh told his brother in a letter that he was desirous of getting such proofs "as would for ever deliver the Regent of having a woman so lost to decency in the relation of a wife."

But the Regent was not yet satisfied. He called in his Hanoverian agents to assist, and one of these, Baron Ompteda, was employed as a kind of super-spy to find evidence against his master's wife. Though Lady Charlotte Campbell told the Princess in the plainest terms this man's purpose in visiting her, she

nevertheless, in that spirit of bravado that her friends found so difficult to understand, invited him to dinner, and showed him much kindness. But the clumsy-fingered Hanoverian got very little beyond a challenge to a duel. He aroused suspicion by trying to bribe the servants, and when he began to make use of the false keys of her room and desks he had procured, he found himself confronted with the aggressive Lieutenant Hownham, who invited him to adjourn to a secluded spot for a little sword-play. But the Baron preferred sneaking to fighting and declined the challenge.

When Caroline embarked on the *Clorinda*, to visit Sicily, Captain Pechell refused to sit at table with her courier Bergami, whom he had previously known as a servant. This enraged the Princess and she and her suite left the *Clorinda* and embarked on an Italian vessel. Captain Pechell's report on this incident was at once transmitted to Carlton House, where he had influential friends, and passed on to the Regent, who began to feel that the stars in their courses were fighting for him, and the time for action was at hand.

The death of the aged Queen for a time diverted the attention of the Regent from the doings of his wife. This took place on November 17th, 1818. During the year three of her sons, the Dukes of Cambridge, Clarence and Kent, had married, and two of these unions had been celebrated in the drawing-room at Kew, as the Queen was too weak and ill to go out.

It was not true, as *The Times* asserted, that the Queen was neglected by her family during her last illness, and it is pleasant to record that the Regent and the Duke of York were assiduous in their care and atten-

tion to the mother who had never manifested any desire to win their love or esteem.

The day before her death, Queen Charlotte made her will, in which she bequeathed most of her property to her daughters. The finest of her splendid collection of jewels she bequeathed to the Crown of Hanover.

The death of the Queen left vacant one office,—the guardianship of the King,—and for this there was an undignified scramble among the Princes. The most suitable candidate for the position was the Duke of York, who had always been his father's favourite, but when it was proposed to instal him in this office and pay him a salary of £10,000 per annum for performing this simple filial duty there was a storm of criticism in Parliament and Press. Writers in the newspapers reminded their readers that in the previous year or two there had been seven Royal marriages for which Parliament had not only provided establishments for the happy couples but handsome allowances to maintain them. In Parliament, members of the Opposition thought that £10,000 a year was an enormous allowance for the expenses of an occasional visit to Windsor. Even Tierney, whom Brougham and Creevey were always sneering at for his weakness and indecision, was moved to indignation.

“The Royal Duke's only duty to his afflicted father,” he said, “would be to go from London or Oatlands to Windsor once or twice a week, and it was modestly proposed that he should be allowed £10,000 a year for the hire of post horses.”

Tierney's statement of the situation was unanswerable, and Castlereagh, knowing the unpopularity of the Princes with the House, saw the wisdom of adjourning the debate.

The aptest comment on this Royal appeal to Parliament is that of the Duke of Wellington in his famous interview with Creevey :

“ By God ! There is a great deal to be said about that. They (the Princes) are the damndest millstone about the neck of any Government that can be imagined. They have insulted—personally insulted—two-thirds of the gentlemen of England, and how can it be wondered at that they take their revenge upon them when they get them in the House of Commons ? It is their only opportunity, and, I think, by God ! they are quite right to use it.”

Finding Parliament unwilling to grant him a large salary as his father's guardian the Duke proposed to undertake the office voluntarily or with out-of-pocket expenses, on which his brother, the Regent, remarked : “ So, sir, you would be popular at our expense ! ”

With the passing of the Queen, the Regent entered into possession of Buckingham House, the old residence of Her Majesty, then an ugly red-brick building, much out of repair. Only a short time before he had called a number of architects into council to consider the addition of a new wing to Carlton House. But this project was immediately dropped as soon as the Queen's house came into his hands.

Here was an opportunity to gratify his passion for building. He desired to remove to Buckingham House, but many alterations were essential. Lord Liverpool, however, viewed the new scheme with modified enthusiasm, and when it was put before him officially thought the occasion a fitting one for preaching a little homily on the subject of economy. He hazarded the opinion that “ however desirable some addition to the Queen's palace may be, it could not

be felt by the country to be indispensably necessary ; and could only think therefore that in the present circumstances of the country such addition would better be deferred."

With a view to relieving the overburdened Treasury, the Premier went on to make the amazing suggestion that " the site on which St. James's Palace now stands should be sold or leased."

Happily for posterity this suggestion was not adopted. Instead, the Regent light-heartedly agreed that Carlton House, on which alterations and extensions had been in progress almost continually for thirty-five years, that had cost the country hundreds of thousands of pounds, should be demolished.

The years 1819-20 were notable in the annals of the English Royal Family. The King, who had been ill so long that he was now almost a legendary figure, was dying, and there were other signs that the old order was changing.

On March 1st, 1819, a daughter was born to the Duke of Clarence. But this Princess, another Charlotte, lived only a few hours.

Nearly three months later—on May 24th, a daughter was born to the King's fourth son, the Duke of Kent. The birth of this Princess excited little public notice, for though she stood in direct succession to the throne, there seemed little prospect that she would ever occupy it. For as two of her father's elder brothers were recently married, it was confidently expected that she would be speedily displaced. But these expectations were not realized. The Duchess of York bore no children. In December 1820 another daughter, the Princess Elizabeth, was born to the Duke of Clarence. But this child lived only three months

so that the succession reverted to the Duke of Kent's daughter. This child was christened at Kensington Palace in the presence of the Regent on June 24th, 1819, and received the names of Alexandra Victoria. The first of these names was given in compliment to the Emperor of Russia, who had been chosen as her godfather.

The future Queen of England was but six months old when her father died, and a week later the King's long course of suffering came to an end.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE MILAN COMMISSION

OF all the Regent's officials the most zealous and industrious was his legal adviser, Sir John Leach, who was also Chancellor of the Duchy of Cornwall.

In 1818 Sir John received a large bundle of papers from the Foreign Office. These comprised reports from secret service officers and spies who had been following and watching the Princess of Wales in her journeys through Europe and Palestine.

Leach, after studying these papers, made an abstract of them, which he placed before the Regent, who in his turn was so impressed that he sent for Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, and asked him to take action. Liverpool consulted Castlereagh, with the result that a Commission, consisting of two lawyers and a dependent of Castlereagh's was appointed to seek further information about the Princess's conduct since she left England.

A year later this Commission assembled in Milan and began to take evidence about the Princess of Wales's conduct, which was furnished through Government secret service agents on the Continent. Copies of the evidence as it was collected were sent to Sir John Leach, who in his turn passed them on to the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool. This Milan

Commission, of which so much was afterwards heard, issued a Report in July 1819.

Sir J. Leach's zeal was approved by the Regent, who procured him advancement in office. Meanwhile, the Regent was impatiently eager to free himself from what he called "the cruellest as well as the most unjust predicament that ever even the lowest individual, much more a Prince, was ever placed in." He urged Lord Liverpool and the Cabinet to give their earnest attention to the Report of the Milan Commission and take action upon it. He sent flattering and endearing letters to Lord Chancellor Eldon. He fortified himself with the opinion of the Chancellor's brother, Sir W. Scott, who assured him "that the late death of the Princess Charlotte had removed the only objection to the divorce." But to ministers the matter was not so simple. They knew that an action by the Regent for divorce against his wife would cause such a scandal as had not been known in England for centuries; that the Princess would not tamely submit to legal persecution, and that as her husband was a man of notoriously immoral life, and could not come to the bar of justice with clean hands, he was unlikely to obtain the release he desired. The thought of the turmoil and public excitement which the trial of a Princess would evoke made the Regent's advisers tremble with apprehension.

Though the Princess was still living in Italy, and likely to remain there indefinitely, her friends were alarmed by the activities of the Regent and his advisers.

It was at this point that Brougham intervened with a suggestion. In a letter to Lord Hutchinson, who was on friendly terms with both sides, Brougham suggested an arrangement. He pointed out that he had



no authority for taking this step, but he thought he had influence enough with the Princess to gain her consent to it. He proposed that there should be a formal separation, an annuity for life, but no coronation for the Queen, and no title. He believed that moderate as these terms were she would agree to them, as she had no desire to return to England now that her daughter was dead.

To ministers this proposal came as a Heaven-sent deliverance and they hailed it with joy. But they reckoned without the Regent. His mind was set on divorce : " by arrangement " if this could be achieved, but it must be divorce. The Prime Minister pressed him to accept Brougham's suggestion, but he would have none of it.

With much muttering and shaking of heads ministers now began to make a thorough examination of the Report of the Milan Commission. This task they completed in fifteen days.

The result of their deliberations is embodied in the following significant minute which was sent to the Regent :

" According to these opinions Your Royal Highness's servants are led to believe that the facts stated in the papers which have been referred to them would furnish sufficient proof of the crime, provided they were established by credible witnesses ; but it is at the same time the opinion of Your Royal Highness's confidential servants that, considering the manner in which a great part of this testimony has unavoidably been obtained, and the circumstances that the persons who have afforded it have been foreigners, many of whom appear to be in a low station of life, it would not be possible to advise Your Royal Highness to

institute any legal proceedings upon such evidence, without further inquiry as to the characters and circumstances of the witnesses by whom it is to be supported."

In this minute there follows a consideration of the different courses that may be adopted, and suggestions for proceedings by a trial for high treason, a suit in the ecclesiastical courts or divorce proceedings in the High Court, are all discussed. But to each and all of these serious objections are found.

In the concluding paragraph ministers record their convictions as follows :

"They are satisfied that evidence which in a common case and before the ordinary tribunals would be deemed fully sufficient, would, in a proceeding of this kind, be received with the greatest suspicion, particularly where the witnesses happened to be foreigners; and they doubt the success of any application to Parliament upon such a transaction, except in a case in which the testimony was so unexceptional, clear, and distinct as to be subject to no reasonable doubt. Most of the objections above stated would not apply to the third proposition—a proceeding for high treason. Such a proceeding would be considered conformable to the due course of law. But on the other hand, it must be observed that the difficulties of obtaining sufficient evidence of the crime of high treason are greater than in any other criminal proceeding, and it would certainly not be advisable to institute it if there did not exist the highest probability of success. Upon the whole of this question your Royal Highness's confidential servants beg leave most humbly to state their opinions as decidedly adverse to any proceeding being attempted in the ecclesiastical courts."

Here we have the edifying spectacle of a Government rejecting "evidence which would be received with the greatest suspicion, particularly where the witnesses happened to be foreigners," and a year or two later, at the bidding of a faithless husband, using it to besmirch the honour of a Queen of England.

We have reason to believe that Lord Liverpool, the son of George III's secretary, was kindly and honest. The greatest fault urged against him by later colleagues like the Duke of Wellington was that he was lazy and spent time that should have been devoted to his official duties in reading the *Quarterly Review*. How did it happen then that he and his colleagues framed a Bill of Pains and Penalties based on this tainted evidence, and not only spoke and voted for it, but cracked the Party whip and rallied the Scottish and Irish peers to its support? Was it due to the insistence of his more forceful colleague Castlereagh, who was constitutionally incapable of understanding Canning's chivalrous refusal to take any part in the prosecution of the Queen?

In political affairs George IV was weak and vacillating. He generally allowed his mistresses or favourites to settle points of policy. But where his personal dislikes were concerned he was all but immovable. In such concerns the Duke of Wellington knew how to manage him. But Lord Liverpool was not a Wellington, and it is more than probable that in the matter of the divorce proceedings the Prime Minister and his colleagues were bullied by the King into acquiescence.

But at the time of this remonstrance—1819—the Regent had no other course but to accept it, which he did with a bad grace.

Lord Hutchinson again pressed the Ministry to accept Brougham's offer, but the Regent was immovable, and the negotiations proved abortive.

On January 29th, 1820, the great bell of St. Paul's announced the passing of George III, and his eldest son George, Prince of Wales, now in his fifty-eighth year, reigned in his stead.

The new King lost no time in taking action against his Consort. Four months after his succession to the throne Lord Liverpool delivered a message from His Majesty which was read by the Lord Chancellor to the House of Lords. The message was as follows :

“ The King thinks it necessary in consequence of the arrival of the Queen to communicate to the House of Lords certain papers respecting the conduct of Her Majesty since her departure from this kingdom which he recommends to the immediate and serious attention of this House. The King has felt the most anxious desire to avert the necessity of disclosures and discussions, which must be as painful to his people as they can be to himself ; but the step now taken by the Queen leaves him no alternative.”

The papers alluded to by the King were contained in a green bag. “ My transgression is sealed up in a bag,” was the Scriptural comment of an onlooker of these proceedings.

After delivering this Royal message Lord Liverpool announced that on the next day he meant to move an Address upon it, assuring the King that their Lordships would take such action as the justice of the case and the honour and dignity of the Crown required.

To the House of Commons a similar message from the King was delivered by Lord Castlereagh. This

provoked a lively debate, and on the following day the Queen's legal adviser, Brougham, delivered a message from Her Majesty in which she said she had returned to England in consequence of measures taken against her honour by secret agents abroad. He pointed out that it was fourteen years since the first charges were made against her and says, "During that long period she has shown the utmost readiness to meet her accusers and court the fullest inquiry into her conduct. She now also desires an open investigation in which she may see the charges and witnesses against her. . . . The Queen cannot forbear to add that, even before any proceedings were resolved upon, she had been treated in a manner too well calculated to prejudice her case."

There was force in this contention. Years before the Prince Regent had sent out a Commission to Milan to collect evidence against his wife, and wherever she went on her Continental travels her footsteps had been dogged by spies. Large sums of money had been spent in obtaining witnesses,—mostly dismissed servants,—and every possible indignity had been heaped upon the Princess. Details of the evidence obtained by the Milan Commission were published in this country, and it was generally assumed by the King's friends that Her Majesty was guilty of improper conduct. But the English populace would have none of this. Indignation meetings were held in all the principal towns of England and Scotland, and the Milan Commission and all its works were denounced with bell, book and candle. Speeches were made at these gatherings in which the character of the King was described with a candour shocking to all but ultra-moderns. Even the most unprejudiced

thought it unfair that this "great English prodigal"—as Thackeray described him—should attack the honour of his wife, after driving her from his home. The House of Commons was bombarded with addresses from all parts of the country demanding justice for the Queen.

George IV was indifferent to these manifestations of unpopularity, and instead of bowing to the storm, raised it to a greater pitch of violence. In this he succeeded to admiration, by striking out the Queen's name from the Liturgy, on the advice of the ineffable Croker.

Though the King was indifferent to public opinion, his ministers were not. They knew that if the Queen came back to England, the King had determined to press for a divorce, and they dreaded the political consequences of such an action.

Britain seethed with unrest. Political reform and religious liberty were long overdue. The patriotic fervour evoked by the Peninsular campaign and Waterloo had subsided, and only the aftermath of high taxation and dear food remained. The French Revolution was a portent, and men whose memories carried them back thirty years had lively fears that the scenes of bloodshed and violence which had taken place in France might be re-enacted here. The Radical party was growing apace, and what it lacked in political influence, it made up in numbers and enthusiasm.

With these considerations in his mind the Tory Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, gained the consent of the King to open negotiations with Brougham and Denman, the Queen's law officers.

The terms suggested were humiliating. A liberal allowance was offered to the Queen if she agreed to

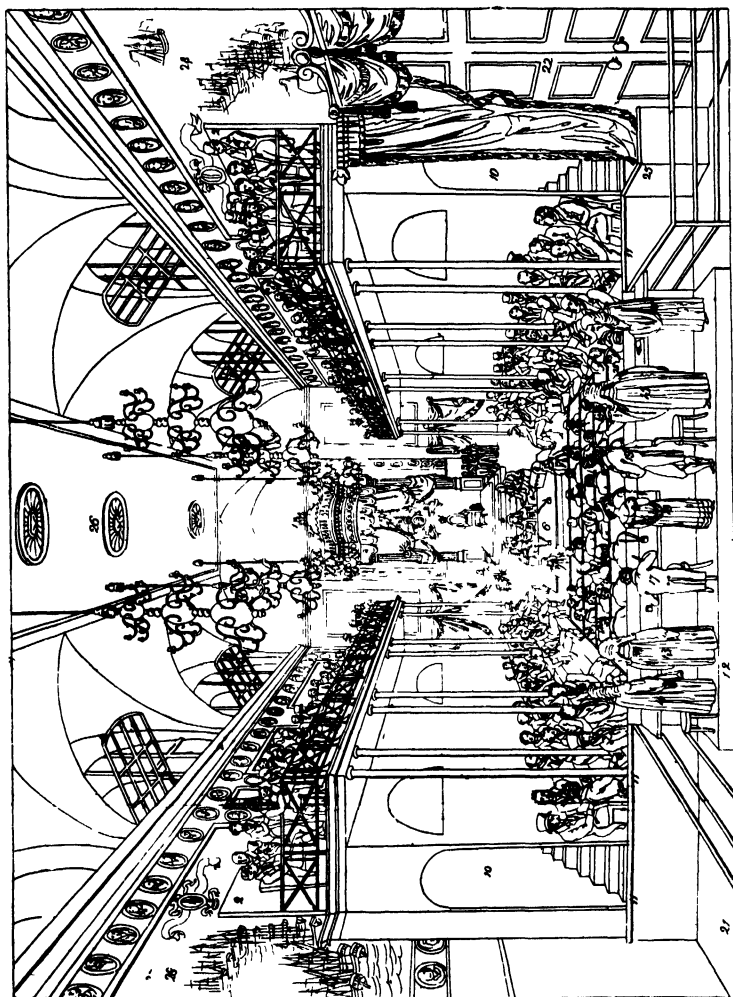
remain abroad. But it was stipulated that she must not assume the style of Queen Consort. If she persisted in coming to England she would have to take the consequences.

At St. Omar, on her way to England, the Queen was met by Lord Hutchinson, the Government representative, and Brougham, who put the offer of the Prime Minister before her. This she declined with contempt and at once set out for England.

The Queen's arrival in England excited interest and enthusiasm. At Dover the guns of the castle boomed a royal salute, and the people drew her carriage through the streets and gave her an ovation. Canterbury was illuminated in her honour. As she approached London she was received in every town and village with delirious joy, and her progress became a great procession from the number of mounted gentlemen who rode behind the Royal carriages. Roars of cheering on Westminster Bridge announced to ministers the arrival of the Queen. Everywhere on the route to South Audley Street she was received as a popular heroine, and the mob found a further outlet for their high spirits in breaking the windows of unpopular people like the Lords Sidmouth and Castlereagh, and also those of the King's mistress, Lady Hertford.

Ministers at once took action, and on the following day the King's message, already quoted, with the precious green bag was sent down to the Houses of Parliament.

But although they had shown fight the King and his advisors still hoped to arrange terms with the Queen, and in the House of Commons the adjournment was moved for the purpose of putting before Her Majesty



SCENE IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS AT QUEEN CAROLINE'S TRIAL





proposals that could be accepted without a sacrifice of honour. But Mr. Wilbeforce's efforts, like those of the Duke of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh, who interviewed the Queen's advocates, came to nothing.

The two principals in this affair were equally obstinate and determined, and it was now open war between them.

The House of Lords appointed a secret committee of fifteen to sift the evidence, and the Government framed a Bill of Pains and Penalties, entitled,

"An Act for depriving Caroline Amelia Elizabeth, Queen of Great Britain, of and from the style and title of Queen of these realms, and of and from the rights, prerogatives and immunities now belonging to her as Queen Consort."

In this Bill the Queen was charged with taking into her services one Bartholomo Bergami, "a foreigner of low situation in life," of not only advancing this man to a high situation in her household, but also of receiving many of his relatives into her service, of conducting herself "both in public and private, in various places, with indecent and offensive familiarities and freedom towards the said Batholomo, and carried on with him a disgraceful, licentious and adulterous intercourse."

The Queen now applied to be heard by counsel to state her claims at the bar of the House of Lords. This was conceded.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE TRIAL

A MONTH later, on August 17th, 1820, the trial began. London was in a ferment, and Whitehall all but hidden by barricades. Ten thousand people assembled in St. James's Square to see the Queen, who was escorted by Lady Hamilton, Sir William Gell and others, leave for the House of Lords. The whole route had been crammed with people since six o'clock in the morning. Every window and housetop was filled with interested sympathisers. It seemed as if all London were for the Queen. Everywhere along the route ladies waved their handkerchiefs, and as Her Majesty passed Carlton House the shouts of the populace were renewed with additional fervour. The crowds noted with delight that everywhere the soldiers on duty presented arms as the Queen passed and several patrols of the Life Guards were greeted with cheers and cries of "Long live the Queen!" The Duke of Wellington, as he made his way on horseback to the House, was received with a storm of groans and hisses. The mob pressed round the Duke and shouted: "We must have the Queen!"—"No foul play, my Lord."—"The Queen for ever!" Other supporters of the King had a similar reception.

Meanwhile the Lords of England were assembling in their Chamber, and the Lord Chancellor at once proceeded to call the roll of the Peers. The Dukes of

Sussex and Gloucester from motives of delicacy were not present, but the Dukes of York and Clarence were there to act as judges in their brother's cause and the former announced that, "Though I have urgent and pressing duties to perform, yet neither they nor relationship shall prevent me from doing my duty,"—a Pickwickian declaration that was unctuously cheered by the Bishops.

While the roll was being called the sound of cheering outside announced the arrival of the Queen, who, as Creevey tells us, looked like a little Dutch doll, "in a suit of black, a crape turban upon her head, and a white lace veil thrown over her." At her entrance the Peers all rose and bowed, and she took her seat at the right side of the Canopy.

After the preliminary business counsel appeared at the bar. The Government was represented by the Attorney- and Solicitor-General, the King's advocate, Dr. Adam and Mr. Park.

For the Queen, Messrs. Brougham, Denman, Lushington, Williams, Tindal, and Wild appeared.

The first shot in the battle was fired by Brougham, who in a notable speech in which he entered a strong protest against the Bill of Pains and Penalties, pointed out that the Bill was a private law, introduced in a particular case for the punishment of an individual, that it suffered a deed to be done, and afterwards pronounced on its innocence or guilt. He assumed that nothing illegal could be laid to Her Majesty's charge. If there was any possibility at law, their lordships could not entertain this Bill for a single moment. He reminded the Peers that the charges all referred to the conduct of Her Majesty before she became Queen when she had no Royal dignity to support.

If the Queen had been charged with offences alleged to be done in that capacity, could any man deny that a Bill of Divorce from her Royal husband must have been the remedy, and that divorce could only be obtained on the ordinary terms? The party claiming the Bill must have come into the House by petition and he would come in vain, if he did not enter it with *clean* hands.

Then, in an oft-quoted passage, Brougham uttered the veiled threat, the full implication of which was fully understood by his auditors. "I put out of view," he said, "at present the question of recrimination. That I willingly postpone till the day of necessity, and in the same way I dismiss for the present all other questions respecting the conduct or connection of any parties *previous to marriage*. These are dangerous and tremendous questions, the consequences of discussing which at the present moment I will not even treat myself to describe. But when the necessity arises, an advocate knows but one duty, and cost what it may he must discharge it. Be the consequences what they may, to any other persons, powers, principalities, dominions, or nations, an advocate is bound to do his duty, and I shall not fail to exert every means in my power to put a stop to this Bill."

Brougham in a letter to Croker thirty years later said that he could have proved Mrs. Fitzherbert's marriage,—here alluded to,—at the trial. He had two witnesses, Errington and Mrs. Fitzherbert. He also had a copy of the Will in which the King called Mrs. Fitzherbert "wife." "It was this," he said, "to which I alluded when I spoke of 'throwing the country into confusion.' I am quite confident

George was aware of what the real trump was that I had in my hand."

Brougham reinforced his invective and threats with many legal arguments, and finally implored the Lords to retrace their steps and promote the substantial welfare of the Kingdom, and the truest honour of the Crown.

His speech, whatever its effect in the Lords, created an immense impression throughout the country.

Denman, who followed for the Queen, was like Brougham destined for the highest legal honours. Of commanding presence and dignified bearing, his powers of advocacy and erudition made him a formidable opponent in any legal tussle. As an orator he was scarcely less impressive than his friend and rival. Like Brougham, he attacked the King with a virulence which to those of the present generation seems astonishing. In discussing the charge of improper familiarity which had been brought against the Queen, he told an anecdote about the King himself which threw his audience into convulsions of laughter. "The most remarkable instance of familiarity between personages of high rank and those of a humble station," he said, "was that of an English sovereign, and a waiter at a tavern." It was said to have occurred when the illustrious party was Prince of Wales during which period a note was once delivered to him, commencing in this way: "Sam Spriggs, of the Cocoa-tree sends his compliments to His Royal Highness." The Prince on afterwards meeting with Mr. Spriggs observed to him, "This may be very well between you and me, Sam; but for God's sake, do not play these tricks with our high fellows; it would never do with Norfolk or Arundel."

After showing the inconsistency of bringing these serious charges against the Queen, to whom but a short month before the King and his Ministry had offered £50,000 a year, the recognition of her Royal rank and the grateful acknowledgement of both Houses of Parliament, Denman turned his big guns on the King.

“Let their Lordships then suppose,” he exclaimed, “the case of a young and accomplished woman coming to these shores from a foreign country, with prospects of splendour almost unparalleled; that on her arrival, instead of meeting an affectionate husband, she found an alienated mind; that the solemnities of marriage did not prevent his being surrounded by mistresses; that the birth of a child instead of affording a pledge of mutual regard, became the signal of aggravated insult, and was shortly followed by her expulsion from the husband’s roof. That even then spies were placed over her to report or to fabricate stories of her conduct. In a case like this where the husband has shown himself indifferent to the honour and happiness of his wife,—where he had abdicated all those duties which alone gave him the rights of a husband,—would their lordships listen for one moment to his case?”

The appeal of Brougham and Denman was unavailing, the House of Lords by a decisive majority refusing to abandon the Bill.

Opening the case against the Queen on Saturday, August 19th, Attorney-General Gifford proceeded to state the facts which were alleged in evidence against Queen Caroline. In 1814 Caroline, then Princess of Wales, left this country, he said, and after a short stay in Brunswick, went to Milan. She was accompanied

at first on her travels by Lady Charlotte Lindsay and Lady Forbes, Mr. St. Leger, Sir W. Gell, and the Hon. Keppel Craven. At Milan she received into her service as a courier a man named Bergami. From Milan she travelled to Rome and thence to Naples, where she arrived on November 8th. At that time a boy seven years of age, named William Austin, whom Her Majesty had adopted, was in the habit of sleeping in the same room as the Queen. On November 9th, three weeks after Bergami had been engaged, the servants were informed that Austin was no longer to sleep in the Queen's room, and that Bergami, who had hitherto slept in the servants' quarters, was to occupy a room which communicated by means of a corridor with that of the Queen. On that evening, asserted the Attorney-General, criminal intercourse between the Queen and Bergami began, and was continued till he quitted her service. That evening the Queen went to the Opera. She returned early, hastened to her chamber, and was observed to go from her own room to Bergami's. On the following morning it was noticed that her bed had not been slept in ; but there were signs that Bergami's bed had been occupied by two people.

From this time onwards it was noticed by the other servants that a considerable alteration took place in the demeanour of Her Majesty towards Bergami, and a freedom was assumed by the latter in which he could not in other circumstances have indulged. A few days later Her Royal Highness gave her last ball at the house of the King of Naples. She attended as a Neapolitan peasant. Presently she returned and in a private room changed her dress. Her courier Bergami retired into the room with her. She then returned



to the ball attired as the Genius of History. The dress worn by Her Royal Highness on that occasion was, in the opinion of witnesses, most indecent and disgusting.

It was observed by those in attendance on Her Majesty that at whatever hour she rose in the morning, Bergami rose at the same time, and that he used to breakfast alone with her in her apartment.

But despite these familiarities Bergami still appeared to the English ladies who attended Her Royal Highness as courier and *valet-de-chambre*. It was only in secret or before the Queen's immediate attendants that these familiarities were at all visible. At Naples Bergami had been injured by a kick from a horse. The Queen hired a servant, introduced by him, as an attendant during his illness. This man slept in a room close to Bergami's and on three or four occasions, saw the Queen, after the Household had retired, go from her own room with much caution to Bergami's. On each occasion she remained a considerable time. This man distinctly heard them kissing. Her Majesty stayed in Naples until the following March. During that period of four months the intimacy described continued without interruption. Bergami was the only one of Her Majesty's servants who ventured to enter her apartments without instructions. He did so at all times, when none of the others dare approach.

On quitting Naples the Queen visited Rome and then travelled north. At Leghorn she left Lady C. Lindsay and went on to Genoa. As most of her English suite had left her when she quitted Naples, she had now no English lady by her side. But at Genoa Lady C. Campbell joined her, and remained

with her until the following May, when she left her at Milan.

At Genoa Bergami attended Her Majesty, riding and walking, and occupied an adjoining bedroom. It was observed here that Her Majesty's bed had scarcely ever been occupied at night, while that of Bergami bore marks of having been used by two people.

Counsel now adduced another circumstance which marked the power this man obtained over Her Majesty. Bergami was a married man, and had a daughter named Victorina. This child, as well as his sister, brother and mother, were all taken into Her Majesty's service. Her Majesty, though she knew that Bergami was a married man, gave out that he was not, and said that the child was one that he had had by some female, and that she was anxious to take it under her Royal protection. At Milan, where she arrived on May 15th, Her Majesty remained without any lady of rank as her attendant. But instead she received into her house a person totally unknown to her, of vulgar manners—and this woman was no other than the second sister of this Bergami. Such was the influence of this man, that Her Majesty received the sister under the title of the Countess of Oldi. Thus at this period one sister sat at her table as a lady of honour, the other lived with the servants. What inference was to be drawn from these facts?

At Venice, which she afterwards visited after her stay in Milan, Her Majesty resided in an hotel. On one occasion she was left alone after dinner with Bergami, who had stood behind her chair as usual. An hotel servant saw her take a gold chain and put it round Bergami's neck. Much familiarity then took place.

He took the chain from his neck and placed it round the Queen's neck, and she in return put it on his. This continued for some time. This fact indicated the increasing influence which this man acquired over Her Majesty's mind.

Learned counsel cited various other incidents, illustrating the force of this contention.

At Milan, to which the Queen and her attendants returned, she gave Bergami a blue silk dressing-gown, which he afterwards wore in the mornings.

In August 1815 she visited Mount St. Gothard. Thence she proceeded to Vannes where she retired to a bedroom in the hotel with him, and remained there a considerable time. After dinner they went to Madona il Monte where they slept, and next day journeyed to the Borromen Islands. The best apartment at the hotel was assigned to Her Majesty, but she refused it, and took a meaner room to afford her paramour an opportunity of being nearer her.

On her return from this tour Her Majesty established herself at D'Este near Como. Here the rooms of Her Majesty and Bergami were only divided by a small cabinet, but their apartments were cut off from all communication with other parts of the house. At the Villa, Bergami was advanced to the position of the Queen's chamberlain, and he now dined regularly at her table. On January 16th, 1816, Her Majesty embarked at Messina in the frigate *Clorinde*, in which she had previous travelled to Genoa. At that time Bergami was her menial, but he was now her chamberlain. The commander of the ship felt it would be degrading him to sit at table with one who had previously served him, and he remonstrated on the subject with Her Majesty. She took a day or two to consider

what she should do, and at last declined the table of Captain Pechel for that of her paramour.

Her Majesty it would thus appear consented to be insulted by an English captain, who, however, had done no more than his duty.

At Catania the chambermaids at the hotel, sitting up one night later than usual at their revels, saw Bergami's door open, and the Princess coming out in such a condition as could leave no doubt of her having passed the night in his room. She was undressed and had a pillow under her arm, on which she always slept.

That fact alone, if it can be proved, fully justified the preamble of the Bill.

Having advanced Bergami to so many honours, Her Majesty now procured him a Knighthood of Malta. He was designated "His Excellency," and afterwards she always addressed him as Chevalier. What reason can be assigned for this?

Her Majesty having resolved to leave Sicily set out on a voyage to Tunis, and afterwards visited Greece. For this purpose she hired a vessel known as a polacre. The sleeping arrangements made on this vessel were similar to those already described. But as this did not suit the parties concerned, a bed was ordered to be brought for Bergami's accommodation into the dining cabin, and this bed was so placed that when the door of the Queen's sleeping-room was open, she and Bergami could see each other while in bed, and hold conversation together. The only access to Her Majesty's bedroom was through the dining-room in which Bergami slept, and when the door of this room was shut there was no means of access to the Queen's. What conclusion could be drawn from this

arrangement but that which other incidents already recorded had suggested?

When at Aun in Syria a tent was erected for Her Royal Highness and a bed fitted up for her within it. While she was in bed in this tent Bergami was seen sitting in his shirt-sleeves, and almost undressed, on the side of the bed. From this tent he was seen coming in a state of undress.

At Jerusalem, Her Majesty procured for her favourite the Order of St. Sepulchre. But not content with this, she instituted an Order of her own called "the Order of St. Caroline," and conferred this Order on several of her servants, making Bergami the Grand Master.

Her Majesty embarked at Jaffa for Italy on board a polacre. In this craft she had a tent put up on the deck to sleep in. In addition to her own bed, a sofa or bed was put there for Bergami. In this way they continued to sleep every night without any partition between them, until the vessel reached Italy. In the daytime the canvas of the tent was drawn up to admit the air, but at night when they retired it was let down to ensure privacy. At this time Her Majesty seemed to have cast off all the restraints of female delicacy. She had often been seen during the day sitting on Bergami's knee and embracing him. It could also be proved that at one period during the voyage she had a bath prepared for her on board the vessel, and into the bath she went, no person being present or in attendance on her except Bergami.

After Her Majesty's return to D'Este, she made a tour to Lugano and other places. One morning a courier was despatched with a letter to a person at Milan, and returned with an answer late that night

when the household was at rest. The courier feeling it his duty to deliver the letter immediately to Bergami, went to that person's chamber. He was not there ; but in a short time he saw him coming in his shirt and *robe de chambre* out of Her Majesty's bedroom to his own. Observing that this was noticed by the courier, he told him that he had heard his child cry, and had gone to quieten her, and the next morning he desired the courier to say nothing about it. But the fact struck the man and the inference from it was plain.

At Carlsruhe in Germany Her Majesty was one day found in Bergami's room ; she was sitting upon his bed, and he was in bed with his arms around the neck of Her Majesty. One of the chambermaids entered the room by chance and saw this extraordinary sight. In that bed was found a cloak which Her Majesty was afterwards seen wearing. The cloak found there, and the manner in which Bergami was seen with his arms round Her Majesty's neck, were circumstances that could not be lost sight of.

When travelling from Vienna to Trieste a two-wheeled carriage was bought by Bergami in which the Queen and he travelled together alone.

It was, the learned counsel said in conclusion, "disgraceful to the country that such circumstances had taken place, but he trusted that the public mind would soon resume its former calmness."

At the end of the Attorney's speech, which occupied two days in delivery, the first witness, Theodore Majocchi, was called. This man, like most of the witnesses for the prosecution, was an Italian servant. As the little dark Italian took his place, the Queen turned and gazed at him for a moment. Then in an

agonized tone she exclaimed, *Traditore !* and evidently labouring under great excitement rose from her seat and left the House, to give vent to her emotion in private. The scream and exclamation had an electric effect on the House. Peers, counsel, and strangers were amazed, and minutes elapsed before the proceedings were resumed.

Two interpreters were then sworn, and the examination by the Solicitor-General began. In answer to counsel Majocchi told the House that he was an Italian, and first became acquainted with Bergami when both of them were in the service of General Pino in 1814. At that time Bergami received three Milan livres a day. Afterwards witness entered Murat's service at Naples, and there met Bergami, who was now employed as courier by the Princess of Wales. Witness also became a servant in the same household in January 1915. Bergami then dined with the upper servants.

"Can the witness describe the relative positions of the apartments of the Princess and Bergami?"

"From the room of the Princess to that of Bergami there was a small corridor and cabinet. Immediately on the left was Bergami's room."

"Then between the two rooms there was nothing but that corridor and cabinet?"

"There was nothing else; one was obliged to pass through the corridor to the cabinet, and from the cabinet to the room of Bergami."

"Did anyone sleep in the cabinet?"

"It was free; nobody slept in it."

"Did the other persons of the suite sleep near the Princess?"

"They were separated."

"Do you remember an accident happening to Bergami?"

"Yes; it was a kick from a horse."

"Was Bergami in bed in consequence of the accident?"

"He was."

"In consequence of this accident was any direction given to you, where you were to sleep?"

"Yes, on the sofa in the cabinet. I slept there five or six nights."

"While you were sleeping there did you see anyone pass through that room?"

"Yes, Her Royal Highness."

"Did the Princess pass through the corridor towards Bergami's room?"

"She did. This happened twice."

"At what time of the night was it on the first occasion?"

"After midnight. She stayed there ten or fifteen minutes."

"Describe the manner in which she walked."

"She went very softly; came near my bed to see if I was awake, and passed on. There was some whispering in Bergami's room."

The witness next gave almost identical evidence with reference to the Queen's stay in Genoa, and mentioned various residences at which she and her suite stayed. He was next asked what took place when Bergami asked permission of the Princess to go to Messina. Witness answered:

"Her Royal Highness gave him leave; and he took her hand, and gave her a kiss on the lips."

The witness was next asked about the voyage to Tunis.



"Do you remember where Bergami slept on board the polacre?"

"Yes, in the cabin where they dined."

"Did the Princess sleep in the cabin adjoining the cabin?"

"Her sleeping room was near it."

"Did any other person sleep in the room where they dined?"

"No."

Questioned about what occurred at Ephesus, Majocchi stated that on the night of her arrival the Princess slept under a tent formed of boughs of trees twisted together. That when he was sent for to this tent he found Bergami there alone with the Princess. The vestibule where the tent was pitched was surrounded by a high wall, and there was no possibility of their privacy being invaded. When witness saw them there, the Princess was sitting on the bed in the tent, and Bergami was at her feet. They remained together for more than an hour, and dinner was served to them there. Speaking of the travelling tent used by the Princess during the journey to Aun, witness said that it contained two circles, one within the other. A bed and sofa were within the inner circle. Bergami was generally alone there with the Princess, but sometimes a little child was also there. When resting there the inner tent was closed from within. The sleeping arrangements were similar on the return voyage from Jaffa, the tent being erected on the deck of the ship.

The Solicitor-General now turned to another topic.

"Do you remember that the Princess bathed while on board the ship?"

"Yes."

"Where was the bath prepared?"

"In the cabin of Her Royal Highness."

"Who assisted Her Royal Highness at the bath?"

"I brought the water, and then Bergami came down, and put his hand in to ascertain its temperature. He then went upstairs and handed Her Royal Highness down. The door was shut, and Bergami and Her Royal Highness remained together."

At this singular story a murmur of disgust and astonishment ran through the House.

"Do you remember," persisted counsel, "when Bergami and the Princess had been thus left together being called up to get more water?"

"Yes, both hot and cold."

"Do you remember who took the water in?"

"I went with it to the cabin. Bergami then half-opened the door, and took it in."

Many questions were then put about the proximity of the bedrooms at the Villa d'Este, and at the various hotels visited during a tour of Germany. The answers to these were consistent with those previously given by the witness. Witness described a dance performed by a Turk named Mahomet, who entered the services of the Princess at Jaffa. The dance, in which certain gestures were made, was performed in the presence of the Princess and Bergami.

Finally, the witness declared that he left the service of the Princess at Pesaro. He was in her household for about three years.

Cross-examination.

Brougham now rose to cross-examine. So strong was the case that Majocchi had made out that many friends of the Queen thought the task an impossible one. But the famous advocate had taken the measure

of the man he had to deal with, and he handled him so trenchantly and skilfully that when he left the bar this Italian servant on whom the prosecution had fondly relied was completely discredited, and the case for the Government considerably damaged.

Brougham had only put two questions to the witness when it became evident that the Lords—the judges in this singular case—would not extend the same indulgence to counsel for the Queen they had shown to the Attorney- and Solicitor-General. No objection had been taken when the Solicitor-General had practically put answers into Majocchi's mouth in the form of leading questions. But as soon as Brougham rose the supporters of the Government in the Upper House at once showed their partiality. Brougham was not the man to be intimidated by any tribunal however august. He began by asking questions about the witness's antecedents :

“ You have told us how you left the services of General Pino. Was it for killing a horse, or something of that sort ? ”

“ No.”

“ You never killed a horse in your life ? ”

“ Never.”

“ Never told anybody that you had ? ”

“ Never.”

At the last question some cries of “ Order ! ” were heard. With the light of battle in his eyes Brougham glared at the assembled Peers and in his iciest tone asked if it was fitting that he should be admonished, as he proceeded in the discharge of his duty, by cries of “ Order.” The Lords were cowed into silence, for none was hardy enough to take up the challenge. Counsel then proceeded to test the witness's memory

of the events so glibly detailed during the examination-in-chief.

"At the second table of the Queen's house at Naples, did you not sit with the servant of Sir W. Gell?"

"*Non mi ricordo.*" (I do not remember.)

"Do you remember the English servant of Mr. Keppel? Did he dine at the second table?"

"*Non mi ricordo.*"

"In Her Majesty's house at Naples, where did William Austin sleep?"

"*Non mi ricordo.*"

"Will you swear that he did not sleep in the next room to Her Royal Highness?"

"This I cannot remember."

"Where did Dr. Holland sleep?"

"*Non mi ricordo.*"

"Will you swear that there was no passage by which Her Royal Highness could enter Bergami's room without going through the room in which you slept?"

"I have not seen any other passage."

"Will you swear there were no other passages?"

"I cannot swear it, but I know of no other than that which I have mentioned."

Pressed further, witness admitted that there was another passage to Bergami's room, without going into the cabinet.

"Where did Hyeronimus sleep?"

"*Non mi ricordo.*"

"Where did Mr. Craven's servant sleep?"

"*Non mi ricordo.*"

"Where did Dame Dumont sleep?"

"*Non mi ricordo.*"

"Where did the Queen's maid sleep?"

"I do not know."

"Was it a very severe accident that Bergami met with from the kick of a horse?"

"It was so severe that he could not go on horse-back."

"Was he attended by any medical man?"

"*Non mi ricordo.*"

"Have you not seen Her Royal Highness go into the room of Sir W. Gell, when he was ill?"

"*Non mi ricordo.*"

"Was it not the constant practice of Her Royal Highness to go constantly into the rooms of her attendants when ill to see after them?"

"*Non mi ricordo.*"

There were gusts of derisive laughter in the House at the constant repetition of the phrase *non mi ricordo*, and it was soon as clear as daylight to everybody that Majocchi had little recollection of anything else but the story for which the King's agents had so handsomely paid him. But Brougham had still much to ask. He now asked him about an incident he had related the day before concerning knocking at Bergami's door late one night, and receiving no answer. Believing the intruders were robbers witness said he fired a gun from the window at them.

"I wish to know how soon after the firing of the piece you saw Bergami and the rest of the family come out?"

"I fired, ran to the room of Bergami, knocked, and received no answer, went back again to the place where I fired and found the family collected. I called out 'Robbers!'"

"How long did you knock at Bergami's door?"

"I remained a long time, knocking louder and louder."

"Where did you see Bergami after that?"

"In the room where the thieves had been."

Questioned about the sojourn of the Princess in Venice, witness admitted that there were two rooms between those of the Princess and Bergami. He also stated that so far from being shut off from the rest of the house the Princess's bedroom had rooms on two sides of it and on the third side a saloon. When questioned where different members of the suite and the servants slept, he could give no information, and the phrase *non mi ricordo* was repeated with maddening monotony. But he also made the damaging admission that he had never known the child Victorina sleep anywhere else than in the bedroom of the Princess.

At the point the official interpreter explained to counsel and the House that the witness was so stupid he did not seem to understand the commonest word.

Asked about the journey when the Princess used tents for resting, witness admitted that pillows were placed on the bed and sofa for the use of Her Royal Highness, but he could not remember any bed-clothes. He could not remember who took away the beds in the morning, nor could he remember that the Princess took off more than a cloak or surtout when she sought repose. He did not remember whether the child Austin slept in the tent either on board ship or land journeys, nor did he remember where the servants slept. From this point Majocchi's memory seemed to be almost a blank, and he was manifestly afraid of saying anything that would weaken the effect of the story that had been so frequently rehearsed before the Milan Com-

mission and representatives of the Government in London.

Asked questions about his own past Majocchi was as difficult to draw as he had been when asked about the Queen's affairs.

"Did you ever apply," asked Brougham, "to be taken back into the service of Her Royal Highness after you left?"

"I do not remember."

"Did you ever apply to Count Vallalli to be taken back?"

"I do not remember."

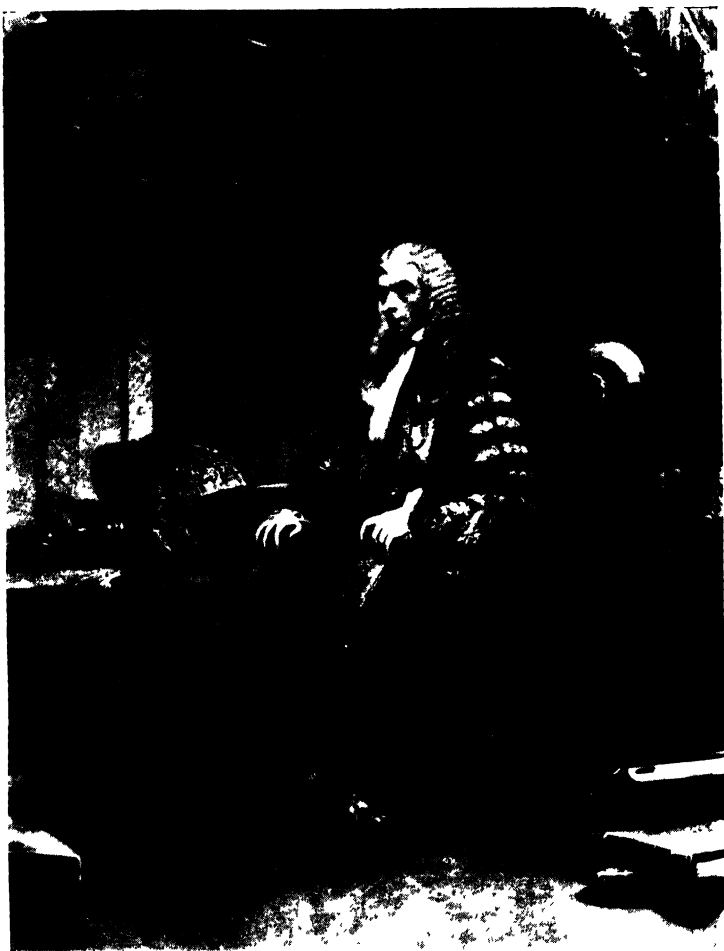
"Did you ever apply to Bergami?"

"I well recollect—never."

Majocchi was re-examined by the Solicitor-General who, however, was unable to obtain any further evidence of value.

But several of the Lords had questions to ask the little Italian. They were more successful than counsel in getting information, and the admissions he made further discounted the value of his evidence. But he was still reticent and the monotonous *non mi ricordo* was his only answer to the majority of questions. He admitted when closely pressed that there were two cabinets in the dining-room, in one of which the bath was prepared. Previously he had been unable to swear whether there were two cabinets or one.

The next witness Paturzo, the mate of the polacre in which the Princess travelled, confirmed Majocchi's assertions as to her behaviour with Bergami on the voyage, and the positions of the bedrooms on board. He said he had seen the Princess sitting on the lap of Bergami, with her arm round his neck, and Bergami's arm round her waist.



*W. T. Mansell, Photo*

HENRY BROUGHAM





In cross-examination witness admitted that he was to have eight hundred dollars a month for coming to give evidence, that the expenses of his journey were paid by the prosecution, and that before appearing he had been examined twice,—once at Milan and again in London.

The owner of the polacre, Vincenze Garquile, next gave evidence. He stated that he had seen Bergami sitting on a gun, and the Princess sitting on his knee,—they were kissing each other. Bergami and the Countess Oldi usually dined with the Princess in the deck tent. Bergami left the vessel for three days. On his return the Princess went to meet him at the top of the ladder, and both went into the tent. The tent was then closed, and the Princess and Bergami remained there all night.

In cross-examination by Mr. Williams, witness stated that he was sent for by the English ambassador at Naples who agreed to pay him 1000 dollars a month for coming to England to give evidence. He admitted that he had supped and spent the previous evening with Paturzo who had given evidence before him, but denied that he had discussed the case with him.

Mr. Brougham now applied for the recall of the first witness, Majocchi. After some discussion this was allowed.

Majocchi seemed to be terrified when he was brought to the Bar and asked through the interpreter if the Lords, finding anything false in his information, intended to behead him.

At this there was general laughter, and cries of "No! No!" from the Lords.

"Were you," asked Brougham, "in the service of a gentleman named Hyatt?"

"Yes."

"Did you ever declare to any person that the Princess of Wales was a most excellent woman?"

"Yes, I said the Princess was a good woman."

"Did you declare the conduct of the Princess highly becoming?"

"I always said she was a good woman, but she was surrounded by bad persons."

"Did you ever say she was a prudent person, and that you never observed anything improper in her conduct?"

"I do not remember that I said so."

"Did you ever complain to any person at Gloucester that Bergami had kept back part of your wages?"

"Yes."

Counsel asked many more questions about statements he was alleged to have made about the Princess of Wales, but the witness took refuge behind his familiar *non mi ricordo* phrase, and would say nothing further.

After the cook of the polacre had given evidence confirming statements of the two previous witnesses, Captain Pechell, Post-Captain in the Royal Navy, was called to the bar.

In reply to the Attorney-General he stated that in March 1813 he was in command of a frigate called the *Clorinda*, and was at Civita Vecchia in that month. Here he received the Princess of Wales on board. Among her servants was Bergami, whose position then was that of a menial servant.

"Were you in the habit of dining with the Princess?" asked counsel.

"Yes, she was entertained at my table."

"Did Bergami wait at dinner?"

"He did."

"After conveying the Princess to Genoa, did you go to Sicily?"

"Yes."

"Had you directions to go to Sicily to receive Her Royal Highness?"

"Yes."

"Had you any communication from the Princess at Messina?"

"Yes."

"What was it?"

"On my arrival at Messina I told Captain Briggs to say to Her Royal Highness that I was ready to do everything in my power to make her comfortable, but I requested that Her Royal Highness would make a sacrifice, as I could not consistently with my duty as an officer admit to my table her servant Bergami, who though now admitted to her company, had been her menial servant. The *Leviathan* sailed next day. In the morning I waited on Her Royal Highness to know her determination. She declined seeing me, but desired Mr. Howman to mention to me that my request could not be acceded to, and that Her Royal Highness would provide a table for herself. The Princess, accompanied by the Countess of Oldi, Bergami and several servants embarked on board the *Clorinda* on January 6th."

"Where did Her Royal Highness dine?"

"In her cabin."

"Who dined with her?"

"I do not know."

"How long was she on board?"

"Three or four days."

The witness was not cross-examined.

Captain Thomas Briggs was then sworn.

In answer to the Attorney-General he said that he was in command of the ship of war *Leviathan*, and was at Genoa in 1815, when he was ordered to convey the Princess of Wales to Sicily.

"Do you remember Her Royal Highness coming to embark?"

"I do."

"Who came with her?"

"The Countess Oldi, Bergami, a child and I believe four other persons."

"Did she dine at your table?"

"Always."

"Did Bergami dine with her?"

"Always."

"With respect to the sleeping apartments, where did you place the cabin for Her Royal Highness?"

"The after part of the *Leviathan* was divided in two. One part I intended for the use of Her Royal Highness. There was one sleeping-room and a drawing-room. Before that there were two other cabins in a line, which I intended for the suite, the Countess Oldi and females. The men I intended to put down below anywhere."

"Was this disposition altered by Her Majesty?"

"It was."

"How?"

"The cabin for the Countess Oldi was altered. An alteration was made in the door, and Bergami was put in that cabin."

"Did you ever observe Her Royal Highness walking with Bergami?"

"Yes. Arm-in-arm at Palermo."

Mr. Denman cross-examined.

After some questions about a dispute between

the Princess of Wales and Captain Pechell, counsel asked :

“ Where did the Countess of Oldi sleep while on board the *Leviathan* ? ”

“ In the room immediately adjoining that of Her Royal Highness.”

“ Was there a door leading from the one into the other ? ”

“ Yes.”

“ And both these rooms opened into the dining-room ? ”

“ Yes.”

Lord Ellenborough then asked the witness some questions.

“ Could anyone pass into the Princess’s room without passing through the dining-room ? ”

“ Nobody.”

“ Did your cabin also open into the dining-room ? ”

“ Yes, it was in one of the angles of the dining-room.”

“ Could any person pass through the dining-room to the Princess’s room without your seeing or hearing them ? ”

“ It was possible, but not very probable, that any communication could have happened without my hearing it.”

One of the Peers then asked : “ Did you ever observe any improper conduct on the part of Her Royal Highness ? ”

“ Never.”

“ Had you ever any reason to suspect her of improper conduct ? ”

“ I saw none.”

Lord Grey than asked, “ When in bed in your

cabin, had the officers on duty always access to you, to make their nightly report ? ”

“ They had constant access.”

Pietro Puche was then sworn.

Examined by the Solicitor-General, who asked :  
“ Do you know an Inn at Trieste called the Black Eagle ? ”

“ Yes, I do.”

“ What is the name of the Inn of which you are the agent ? ”

“ The Great Inn of the Town.”

“ Do you remember the Princess of Wales coming to that Inn ? ”

“ Yes, I do.”

“ Who came with Her Royal Highness ? ”

“ Bergami came with her, without any other person.”

“ How long did the Princess remain at the Inn ? ”

“ Six days.”

“ Did the door of the bedroom of the Princess open into the dining-room ? ”

“ Yes, it did.”

“ Did Bergami’s door open into the dining-room ? ”

“ The room where Bergami slept opened into the room of his sister the Countess Oldi.”

“ Was there any other door that led into the dining-room ? ”

“ Yes, the door that led out.”

“ Can you tell whether that door was fastened at night ? ”

“ It was fastened.”

“ Did you ever in the morning see Bergami come out of any room into the dining-room ? ”

“ I have seen him come out of the Princess’s room.”

“ At what time in the morning ? ”

"At about half-past seven."

"How often during the stay of the Princess did you see this?"

"Three or four times."

In cross-examination the witness stated that he spied on the Princess and Bergami through a hole in the tapestry that covered a secret door.

The appearance of the next witness, Barbara Krantz, created a sensation. "She looked," says a contemporary report, "coarse and vulgar, and her face is particularly ferocious. Her hair is like that of a horse." Examined by the Attorney-General she stated that before her marriage she lived at a post inn at Carlsruhe, where she remained for nearly two years. "Do you remember a person coming with the Princess of Wales, called Bergami?"

"Yes."

Witness stated that the Princess and Bergami occupied bedrooms each of which led into the dining-room.

"Do you remember," asked counsel, "having occasion to carry water to Bergami's room?"

"Yes."

"Did you see anybody?"

"Yes, Bergami and the Princess."

"Where was Bergami when you went into the room?"

"In bed."

"Where was the Princess?"

"She sat on the bed."

"Could you see whether Bergami had his clothes on or off?"

"No; but I could see the arms were white. When I entered I saw that Bergami had his arms round the



neck of the Princess ; and when I entered the Princess let the arm fall."

"What did the Princess do when you came into the room ?"

"She jumped up and was frightened."

"Did you make up the bed in Bergami's room ?"

"Yes."

"Did you at any time when you were making up the bed discover anything on it ?"

"In the bed I found a cloak."

"Was it a cloak that appeared to belong to a woman ?"

"Yes, because it had a kind of hood."

"What time of day was it when you found the cloak in the bed ?"

"In the morning when I made the bed."

"Did you afterwards see anyone wearing the cloak ?"

"I saw a cloak the next day on the Princess, but I cannot say it was the same."

"Was it of a similar description to that you have seen her wear ?"

"Yes, it was of the same colour."

"Do you know whether it was of the same silk ?"

"Yes, it was likewise silk."

The witness was then cross-examined by Mr. Brougham. As Lord Liverpool and other supporters of the Government objected strongly to the latitude allowed to counsel for the Queen in cross-examination, a long debate ensued, extending over two sessions, as to the procedure to be adopted at future hearings. Brougham pleaded that as the Government would not give counsel for the Queen a list of witnesses, and had refused a specification of the places where the alleged

criminal acts had taken place, he and his colleagues should be allowed to cross-examine witnesses briefly after their examination-in-chief, and afterwards question them fully. "The party accused," he said, "knows not when or where the crime with which she is charged is alleged to have been committed. This was the defence of innocence, not of guilt. If there were guilt, a knowledge of the places might exist, and of course, an idea of the particular nature of the charges would suggest itself."

Lord Erskine supported this appeal in a powerful speech in which he stated that the House was not really aware of what the counsel asked. "They asked," he said, "that evidences should not go forth to poison the public mind without the best antidote they could give at the best time,—that they should proceed as far in the cross-examination as they were enabled by their limited knowledge of the witness, and that the bane and antidote should go together."

These appeals had their effect. Lord Liverpool and his ministers wavered, and the erratic course they took indicated the indecision of their minds. On the Saturday they decided that counsel for the Queen should cross-examine twice. On the Monday they withdrew this permission. On the day following, Lord Harrowby,—a member of the Cabinet,—moved that defending counsel should be allowed unrestricted cross-examination. Lord Eldon, the Chancellor, opposed this motion, but it was carried by 121 to 106. The three law lords—Eldon, Manners and Redesdale,—and the two Royal Dukes,—York and Clarence—voted in the minority.

"Was there ever such a state of things?" asked Creevey, noting with glee this undignified wobbling

of the Queen's judges. The comments on the Trial in the Diary of this famous chatterbox make very amusing reading. A fervid Radical, his moods vary from dejection to jubilation. To him, as to the rest of the Mountain, the fortunes of the party were bound up with those of the Queen. For Caroline herself, Creevey and Brougham his friend, have nothing but contempt. Thus on the day the Trial opened he says, "the nearest resemblance I can recollect to this much-injured Princess, is a toy which you used to call Fanny Royds. She popped all at once into the House, made a *duck* at the throne, another to the Peers and a concluding jump into the chair which was placed for her."

A few days later he stood on the steps of Lord Melbourne's house, and noted with amazement that the Dowager Gwydyr with her family all bowed again and again as Queen Caroline passed on her way to the House of Lords, "as if they had been good Catholics, and the Queen the Virgin Mary."

At this period Creevey's nerves must have been much frayed, for he has scarcely a good word for anyone associated with this famous case. He writes "of Wicked-shifts Grey grinning from ear to ear"; of Lady Ann Hamilton bearing a striking resemblance to one of Lord Derby's great red "deer"; of "the insanity" of Sir Robert Wilson and Tierney; of the Attorney-General's "perfect incompetence to manage a case like this"; and of Caroline herself as "the Eternal Fool."

But he notes also that during the ten days the trial had so far lasted, the fortunes of the Queen's party have been steadily rising. He is delighted with the "body blow" Brougham gave the Duke of York

on Mrs. Clark's affair, which gave "great offence." He speaks of Brougham's opening speech as "excellent." The Attorney-General's opening of the case gave him some qualms, but the evidence of Captains Pechell and Briggs restored him to high spirits. "So far," he says, "from proving anything against the Queen they have distinctly sworn that there was not the slightest impropriety in the conduct of the Queen during the period she was on board their ships."

He is also greatly relieved to find that Pechell and Briggs were to be the only English witnesses. The Duke of Wellington had met him a day or two before and told him that there were to be a great many English witnesses—officers, and this had frightened him a great deal. Now he began to hope for a happy issue.

But the Government had still their star witness to bring forward, a Swiss lady's maid of higher intelligence and more education than the Italian servants who had come forward to testify to the Queen's guilt. She gave her name as Louisa Demont. Examined by the Solicitor-General witness stated that she entered the service of the Princess of Wales at Lausanne as first *femme de chambre*. From Lausanne they went to the Royal Hotel at Milan. Bergami was then employed as courier, and waited at table; he also had his meals at the servants' table. When the Princess and her suite arrived at Naples, Bergami was allotted a bedroom separated from that of the Princess by a small cabinet and a passage. On the evening after her arrival in Naples the Princess went to the Opera. She returned early in the evening and went to her bedroom. She rang for witness, and issued instructions that the little boy Willie Austin was

not to come into her room as she wished to be quiet. There were two beds in the bedroom of the Princess, a large one, and a small travelling bed. The Princess usually slept in the small bed.

"Did you take notice of the travelling bed next morning?" asked counsel.

"Yes, I did. I noticed that nobody had slept in it."

"What observations did you make of the larger bed?"

"I observed that it had been occupied."

"Did the witness while in Naples see Bergami in the same room with Her Royal Highness?"

"I have seen him in the bedroom very often."

"Did the witness see any other person present while Her Royal Highness was making her toilette?"

"Yes, the boy William Austin and Bergami."

"Was Bergami courier at that time?"

"He was."

"In what state of dress was Her Royal Highness then?"

"Sometimes she was dressed, sometimes not."

"Does the witness remember ever seeing Bergami in the passage of which she made mention, at night?"

"I do remember."

"Where was Her Royal Highness then?"

"In her bedroom."

"Was she dressed or undressed?"

"Undressed."

"Where was witness standing?"

"I was near Her Royal Highness's bed."

"Where was Bergami when the witness saw him?"

"I have seen Bergami come out of his room, and come through the passage."

"In what direction was Bergami moving?"

“He was going towards the room of Her Royal Highness.”

“What was the state of Bergami’s dress when the witness saw him?”

“He was not dressed at all.”

“Had he anything on but his shirt?”

“No more.”

“The witness has said that the Princess was undressed; had she got into bed or not?”

“She was not in bed.”

“When the witness saw Bergami in the manner she has described, what did she do?”

“I ran away: I escaped by a little door near me out of the Princess’s room.”

“Will the witness tell the appearance of the large travelling bed; whether two or one appeared to have slept in it?”

“More than one person appeared to have slept in it.”

“How was it on subsequent nights?”

“I have always seen it the same at Naples.”

“Does the witness remember a masked ball given by Murat to Her Royal Highness?”

“I do.”

“Where did Her Royal Highness dress herself for the ball?”

“In a small room of the house where the ball was given.”

“What character did Her Royal Highness first appear in?”

“In the character of an Italian country girl.”

“Whose business was it to assist her in putting on the dress of that character?”

“Mine.”

"How long did the Princess remain in that character?"

"About an hour."

"Did she return for the purpose of changing her dress?"

"Yes."

"What dress did she take a second time?"

"The Genius of History."

"Did Her Royal Highness change her dress entirely for that purpose?"

"Yes."

"Who assisted in changing the dress?"

"Bergami went into the room where the toilette was."

"Where did you go?"

"I stood in the ante-room."

"How long did Bergami remain?"

"I cannot remember precisely."

"About how long?"

"About three-quarters of an hour."

"Did the Princess come out alone, or did anyone come with her?"

"Bergami came out first, and Her Royal Highness came out after."

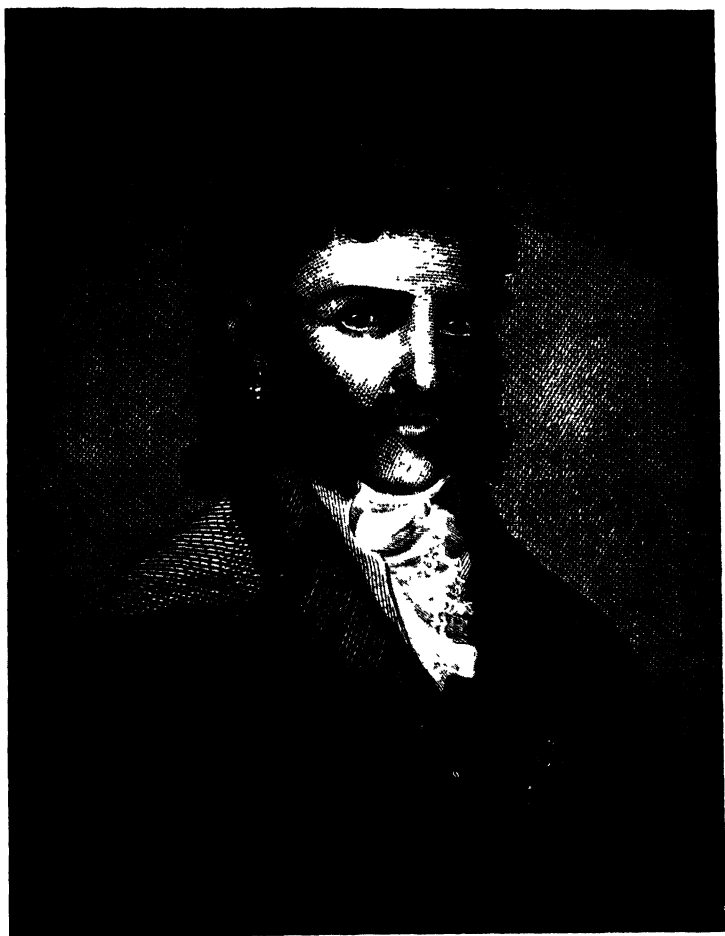
"How long was the Princess absent when she went again to the ball?"

"She returned to the ante-room three-quarters of an hour later."

"Describe the manner in which she was dressed in this character?"

"Her arms were bare, her breast bare, and the drapery was as usual in the character."

"Did she then go again into the dressing-room to change her dress?"



BARTOLOMO BERGAMI





"She did."

"What character did the Princess take a third time?"

"Something like a Turkish peasant."

"Did she go to the ball alone or with Bergami?"

"With Bergami."

"Did she return soon?"

"She returned immediately."

"Did the witness see Her Royal Highness soon after Bergami returned from the ball?"

"I don't remember."

"Did you make any observations except what you have said of the mutual conduct of the Princess and Bergami, while at Naples?"

"Only that they were very familiar one towards the other."

Witness gave evidence as to the proximity of the bedrooms of the Princess and Bergami at Genoa, where the party stayed two months, and at Boromea, Milan, Lugano and the Villa d'Este.

Answering questions about the voyage in the polacre *Industry* which the party boarded at Augusta, witness stated that at first Bergami occupied a cabin near the dining-room, but that afterwards he slept in the dining-room.

"How many doors," asked counsel, "were there leading into that dining cabin?"

"There were two doors."

"Where did Her Royal Highness sleep?"

"In a cabin near the place where Bergami's bed was."

"Did you ever go into the dining-room when Bergami was in bed?"

"Yes."

"Did you ever see the Princess in bed at the same time?"

"Yes."

"Was the door opening from Her Royal Highness's cabin into the dining-room open or shut?"

"Sometimes it was open, sometimes it was shut."

"At the time when it was so open, and when they were both in bed, can you state anything which passed between them?"

"I saw them twice speaking together."

"Did you in the morning at Utica, before the Princess left her bedroom, see Bergami?"

"Yes."

"Was it before she was out of bed or not?"

"Before Her Royal Highness was up."

"What did you see Bergami do?"

"Bergami passed through our room and went into Her Royal Highness's room."

"How long did he remain there?"

"I do not recollect."

"Did you afterwards go into the room?"

"I only went to the threshold of the door; Her Royal Highness asked me for something."

"Did you see whether she was still in bed?"

"I saw that Her Royal Highness was still in bed."

"Was Bergami still in the room?"

"Bergami was in the room."

"After Her Royal Highness had spoken to you, what did you do? Did you go into the room or retire?"

"I withdrew."

"Do you remember going, while you were in Tunis, to a place called Zavouan?"

"Yes."

“Do you know in what room Her Royal Highness slept at Zavouan ? ”

“Yes.”

“What room was adjoining the bedroom of Her Royal Highness ? ”

“The room in which she dined.”

“Did you see her bed in the morning ? ”

“Yes.”

“Did it appear as if one person only had slept in it, or more than one ? ”

“It seemed to be much in disorder.”

“Can you say, according to your judgment, whether one or two persons had slept in it ? ”

“I cannot say that two persons had slept in the bed, but it rather appeared to me that two persons had slept in it, rather than one.”

“Do you remember being at a place called Aun ? ”

“Yes.”

“Did you sleep in any house at Aun, or did you encamp ? ”

“We slept under tents.”

“Did Her Royal Highness sleep under a tent ? ”

“Yes.”

“Was there any bed or bedstead placed under that tent ? ”

“There were two small beds in this tent.”

“Did you go to the tent for the purpose of undressing Her Royal Highness ? ”

“Yes.”

“Did you leave her undressed in bed, or up ? ”

“I left her undressed, and she was lying on her bed.”

“Where was Bergami ? ”

“Under the same tent.”

"Was he dressed, undressed, or partly dressed?"

"He was dressed, but he had no coat on."

"When you retired did you leave them both there?"

"Yes."

"At what time in the evening did you pursue your journey?"

"At six o'clock."

"Did you see Bergami on that evening when you were preparing to continue your journey?"

"I saw Bergami near the tent of Her Royal Highness."

"You have stated that you left Her Royal Highness in the morning when she retired to rest upon the bed in the tent, and that you left Bergami there also. Were the sides of the tent put down at that time or were they not put down?"

"As far as I can recollect it was shut on all sides."

"Did you again in the course of that journey, before you arrived at Jerusalem, sleep in tents?"

"Yes."

"Did Her Royal Highness sleep under the same tent as before?"

"Yes."

"Do you remember any day during the time you were at Jerusalem seeing Bergami in the bedroom of Her Royal Highness?"

"Yes."

"Where was he in the bedroom of Her Royal Highness?"

"He entered the room as I was there, and threw himself on the bed in a ludicrous or jesting way."

"Was the Princess in the room at the time?"

"Yes."

"Did he remain on the bed?"

"Not long."

"Do you remember observing the slippers of Bergami?"

"I know once he had white slippers."

"Did you ever see those white slippers anywhere?"

"Sometimes in Her Royal Highness's bedroom."

"Do you remember the second night that you slept under tents in going to Jerusalem, at Bagosa, seeing any articles of dress in the tent under which Her Royal Highness slept?"

"I saw something belong to Bergami, but I cannot recollect of what description it was."

"Did Her Royal Highness ever go to pay a visit to Count Pino before she went to Greece?"

"Yes."

"Did you sleep near or far from the Princess at the house of Count Pino?"

"Near the Princess."

"Was there any door opening from your room into the bedroom of Her Royal Highness?"

"Yes."

"Did Bergami come into your room during that night?"

"When I had lain down I saw Bergami passing through my room."

"Where did he go to?"

"He was going towards the room of Her Royal Highness."

"Was there any light in your room?"

"A little night-light."

"Did you see him come out again?"

"I fell asleep and did not see him come out."

Witness next gave evidence about the visit of the Princess and her suite to Bergami's house, which was

called the Barona. Here balls were given by the Princess that were attended by very common and vulgar people. Here the party stayed for two months. The Princess then set out for Germany and the Tyrol. When at Scharnitz, Bergami was sent on one morning to Innsbruck to obtain passports. About this counsel asked: "Do you recollect what arrangement was made for sleeping that night at Scharnitz?"

"Yes."

"Did anyone go to bed in the Princess's room beside herself?"

"Myself. I went at ten o'clock at the same hour as the Princess."

"Did Bergami return from Innsbruck that night?"

"Yes."

"Did you sleep in the same bed with the Princess, or in another bed?"

"In a small bed made on the floor."

"Upon the arrival of Bergami did you receive any orders from Her Royal Highness?"

"I was told I might take my bed and go. I saw Bergami the moment these orders were given me."

"Where did you see him?"

"In the bedroom of Her Royal Highness."

"Can you tell how long it was after you had been in bed when Bergami arrived?"

"It was nearly two hours."

Witness remembered that when at Carlsruhe she went into the Princess's room early in the evening and saw the Princess and Bergami sitting close together. Bergami's arm was round her waist, and her head on his shoulder. At the Villa Brandi, near Rome, witness occasionally saw Bergami in the Princess's room when she was making her toilette. Witness was once in

the bedroom at the Villa Caprile when both the Princess and Bergami were present. When the Princess removed her dress before putting on another, instead of leaving the room Bergami watched the operation with interest and turning to the Princess remarked, with a laugh, "How pretty you are. I like you better so."

After an examination-in-chief lasting two days, the Solicitor-General intimated that he had no more questions to ask this informative lady's maid. Miss Demont had, so far, proved an admirable witness. Everyone was aware that her evidence would have an important bearing on the issue. When she first appeared at the bar, Lords, counsel and spectators all gazed at her with an interest that to a less assured woman would have been embarrassing in the highest degree. But Demont was not intimidated by this august assembly, and she answered the questions of counsel with readiness and fluency.

A severe test awaited her when on Friday the 1st of September she appeared at the bar and faced Mr. Williams, who was famous on the northern circuit for his ability as a cross-examiner. But Demont enjoyed one great advantage over the Italian witnesses who had given evidence. She had, as she told counsel, lived thirteen months in England and so understood the questions when they were put, and as they were afterwards translated by the interpreter she had time in which to think out her answers. As she was also well-educated and quick-witted the task of breaking down her evidence, which Williams had undertaken, was one of no common difficulty.

He began quietly enough by asking witness questions about her real name. "Since you have been in



England," asked counsel, "have you always borne the same name, Louisa Demont?"

"No, I took the name of the place where I was born, 'Colombier.'"

"Did you take a title as well? Were you called Countess Colombier?"

"No."

"Nor were ever so called, were you?"

"I was so called only by one person."

"Where were you living when the person called you Countess?"

"In Frith Street."

"During the time you lived in Oxford Street nobody called you Countess, did they?"

"I do not recollect it at all."

"Will you swear they did not?"

"I will not swear to it, but I cannot recollect it."

Witness, questioned about the sojourn at Naples, said she did not know where the servants of Sir William Gell and Mr. Keppel Craven slept even on one night.

"Where did you sleep yourself?" asked counsel.

"In a little apartment above Her Royal Highness's."

"Did you sleep alone in that room every night?"

"I slept alone in that room every night."

The significance of this question and answer will be apparent when the evidence of J. Whitcombe, Mr. Keppel Craven's servant, is read.

Witness was unable to say when she saw Bergami coming out of his own room in a state of undress at Naples. It was on one occasion only. Asked if it was one month, two or three months after she went there, she found it impossible to say. Asked about the ball at which the Princess appeared as the Genius

of History, witness stated that the King of Naples and a considerable number of the nobility and gentry were in the room, and that some of these assumed characters similar to that of the Princess. Asked about the journey to Jerusalem, witness said that the Princess travelled all the way on horseback and that the Countess of Oldi and witness went in a carriage. During that journey, the Princess rested by day and travelled by night. "Do you mean to say that the Princess was undressed under the tent at Aun?"

"When I left the Princess she was in a white petticoat."

"Do you mean to say that the Princess was undressed at Aun?"

"She had pulled off her upper habiliments."

"Do you mean by that the dress in which she had been riding?"

"Yes, a gown or robe, which was open."

"Do you mean more than the outer garment of whatever description?"

"Her Royal Highness was in a white gown or petticoat alone."

"When the Princess was about to start, had she more to do to her dress than to put on the exterior habili-ment which you mentioned?"

"I do not think she had anything else to put on."

"You said that Bergami went from Scharnitz to Innsbruck to get passports?"

"Yes."

"You were upon a bed in the room of the Princess?"

"Yes."

"Had you taken off more than your gown?"

"I do not perfectly recollect, but I believe not."

"Do you remember the dress the Princess was in the habit of wearing at that time?"

"Yes."

"Had not the Princess gone upon the bed with that dress upon her, in the middle of the preceding day?"

"Yes."

"Did you see Her Royal Highness take it off at all while she remained at that inn?"

"I do not recollect seeing it."

"You entered the service of the Princess in 1814 and left in 1817?"

"Yes."

"Did you quit the Princess's service of your own accord, or were you discharged?"

"I was discharged."

"Were you not discharged for saying something which you afterwards admitted to be false?"

"Yes, in fact it was not true."

"Did you go into any other service after you were discharged from the Princess's before you came to England?"

"No."

"Did not your money fail you before you came to England?"

"No, because I had money in Switzerland and I might have got it if I had been in want of it."

"You were applied to by some person or other very soon after you were discharged by the Princess?"

"Not very soon after. It was nearly a year after I left the service."

"Will you swear that?"

"Yes."

Closely pressed witness said: "May I be allowed to explain? About six months after I left the service

of Her Royal Highness I wrote to my sister to say that an application had been made to me but that it was a *double entendre* between me and my sister."

"Have you never said that the Princess was surrounded with spies when in Italy?"

"I do not recollect ever having said it."

"Will you swear that you have not?"

"I will not swear, but I do not recollect it."

"Either in conversation or in any other manner, have you represented it?"

"I recollect nothing at all about it."

"Do you know Baron Ompteda?"

"Yes, I have known him."

"How many time have you known him upon a visit to the Princess?"

"I have seen him at three different places."

"On which occasion was it that a complaint was made by the Princess of his conduct in her house?"

"As far as I recollect it was at the Villa Villani."

Witness stated that the Princess made complaints about the Baron, but did not remember whether these were made whilst he was residing there or not. She did not recollect the subject of the complaint.

"You yourself," suggested counsel, "took a considerable share in the business of the complaint, did you not?"

"None."

"Did you not write a challenge; did you not copy it?"

"No."

"Did not Mr. Howman desire you to write a letter for him to Baron Ompteda?"

"I recollect nothing about it."

"Is that your writing?" said counsel holding out

a letter to the witness, so folded that she could see only the last line and a half.

"It is not exactly like my writing."

"Do you believe it to be your writing or not?"

"I do not recollect having written it."

Counsel asked many questions, but witness declined to admit that the handwriting was her own. "Do you not remember," said counsel, "writing in these words—'You know I say in it (my journal) a great deal of the best and most amiable Princess in the world; I relate in detail all the traits of sensibility and of generosity which she has shown, the manner in which she has been received, applauded, cherished, in all the places we have visited?'"

"I recollect that I wrote to my sister very often, and spoke of Her Royal Highness."

"And to this effect?"

"I do not recollect whether it was in that sense. I will not swear I have not done it."

"'You know that when the Princess is my subject I am not barren, consequently my journal is embellished with the effusion of my heart, my greatest desire having always been that the Princess should appear to be what she really is, and that full justice should be rendered to her.' Do you remember having written to that effect?"

"It is always the same thing. I have written frequently to my sister, and as I was much attached to the Princess at that time I wrote a great deal about her. But I do not remember the expressions of which I made use."

A number of letters were after a long legal argument handed to the witness, who admitted that they were in her handwriting. These were then put in as evidence.

Three letters written by witness, which she acknowledged as her own, were then read aloud, first in French and then in English. On these counsel proposed to ask some questions. The first of these letters was addressed to her sister after Demont had left the Princess's service. In this she speaks "of the extreme goodness of Her Royal Highness" and recommends her sister "to preserve always such valuable kindness." Then referring to her dismissal she says, "Oh, God, I would surrender half my life could she but read my heart. She would then be convinced of the infinite respect, the unlimited attachment, and perfect gratitude I shall always entertain for her august person." There is much more in the same strain.

Then at the end of the letter, after many protestations of loyalty and attachment to the Princess, comes a curious little story. "On the 24th of last month I was taking some refreshments at my aunt Clare's when I was informed an unknown person desired to deliver me a letter, and would trust it to no one else. Judge of my astonishment when I broke the seal,—a proposal was made to me to set off for London under the false pretence of being a governess. I was promised a high protection and a most brilliant fortune in a short time. The letter was without signature, but to assure me of the truth of it, I was informed I might draw at the banker's for as much money as I wished. You see, my dear, with what promptitude the enemies of our generous benefactress always act. There must always be spies about her. . . . They thought to find in me a person revengeful and ambitious. . . . A good reputation is better than a golden girdle."

The letter to the Princess of Wales in which Demont

asked the Princess to take her younger sister into the Royal Household, began as follows :

“ ROYAL HIGHNESS,

It is on my knees that I write to my generous benefactress beseeching her to pardon my boldness . . . ”

Counsel asked a number of questions about these letters and Demont entered on a long rambling explanation as to why she wrote about the Princess to her sister in such laudatory terms. The gist of this explanation was that Bergami sent her a note telling her that if she wrote to her sister speaking in complimentary terms of the Princess, her sister would probably be saved from dismissal.

Counsel was plainly sceptical, and asked in ironical terms : “ Have you given a full explanation, or have you more to add ? ”

“ I have no further explanation.”

“ Anything further?—consider well before you answer.”

“ I wished by the letters to convince the Princess, who doubted of my speaking of her, that though I should have questions put to me, money would not tempt me.”

“ Have you any other explanation ? ” asked counsel dryly.

“ I must say also that at that time I felt a degree of attachment to Her Royal Highness, and grateful for the kindness she had used towards me whilst I was in her house.”

“ Any more ? ” and now Williams’s tone was plainly contemptuous. Witness said that she had forgotten the contents of the letters.

Although many more questions on this subject were asked, witness was unable or unwilling to throw any further light upon it.

As Creevey remarked in his Diary, Demont left the bar thoroughly discredited, and the Queen's party were jubilant.

The next witness, Luigi Galdini, informed counsel that he was an Italian, and a mason by trade, and said he had worked at the Villa d'Este for a fortnight. There one day on opening a door he saw the Princess and Bergami sitting together. Bergami had his right arm round the neck of the Princess. Bergami immediately jumped up and said, "What do you want here, you son of a dog?" Witness apologized and said he was looking for the factor. Another time he saw the Princess riding on an ass, and Bergami was steadying her with his hand on her back.

Alexandro Finetti on being sworn described himself as an Italian ornamental painter. He was engaged by Bergami, and worked for two years at the Villa d'Este. Afterwards he went with the Princess to Rome, as a servant. He saw the Princess and Bergami many times together, walking about the grounds. On these occasions the Princess was generally holding Bergami's hand. Many times he saw them on the lake together in a boat. One morning about ten o'clock he saw Bergami come from the side where the Princess's room was. He was wearing only a dressing-gown. On other occasions he saw the Princess and Bergami embracing at the Villa d'Este and Caprile.

Dominico Brusa, who next gave evidence, stated that he was a mason and was for two years in the service of the Princess. He saw the Princess and Bergami together many times, both walking and in a boat.



Once at the Villa d'Este he saw them sitting together in an arbour. They were alone. In an apartment at the Villa d'Este he saw them stroking each other's faces.

Four Italians, Bianchi, Luxini, Rancatta and Cassina, followed each other to the bar, and stated in evidence that they had seen the Princess and Bergami boating, walking and driving together. Rancatta also testified that he had seen them kissing upon one occasion.

Giuseppe Raſtelli was next sworn. He said that he had been in the service of the Princess as chief superintendent of the stables for more than a year. When he first entered her service she was at the Villa d'Este. He had seen Bergami riding with her in a carriage called a *padovenallo*. On these occasions she sat on Bergami's knee. They also often drove together in an open carriage. It was his duty to accompany the carriage on horseback. On the return from one of these drives he went up to the carriage to take orders, and noticed that their behaviour was indecent. On another occasion he saw them kissing and heard them using endearing expressions to each other.

In cross-examination witness admitted that he had been dismissed from the service of the Princess in 1817. Witness denied that he was dismissed for stealing corn.

"You never," asked counsel, "said to anybody that you had been dismissed on a charge of stealing corn, did you?"

"I could never tell this lie."

"Do you mean that you never tell a lie, or never without being well paid for it?"

The Solicitor-General objected to the question.

Counsel then turned to witness's connection with the Milan Commission. Witness admitted that in addition to making his own deposition he became an active agent of the Commission and travelled to Westphalia and other places to bring back witnesses. He admitted taking a letter to a man named Crede, whom he persuaded to tender evidence. He also travelled to Paris and Frankfort on the business of the Commission.

The next witness, Giuseppe Sacchi, said that he entered the service of the Princess in 1816, and was with her for a year. He acted as courier. When at the Villa d'Este he was sent by the Princess with a despatch to the Duchess of Parma. When he brought back a reply, the Princess was at dinner. She read the despatch he brought and threw it to one side. Then Bergami, who was beside her, picked it up and read it without asking permission. On returning with another despatch after midnight witness went to Bergami's bedroom. He found the bed tumbled but no one in the apartment. Bergami came out of another bedroom in his dressing-down and received his message. He had often seen the Princess and Bergami walking together arm-in-arm, and had heard them address each other as "my love" and "my angel!" When the Princess went to Turin, witness went in advance and made arrangements there for the accommodation of the Princess and her suite. He selected the best bedroom for the Princess, and for the gentlemen rooms in another part of the house. But this arrangement suited neither the Princess nor Bergami, and the allocation of the rooms was altered so that those of the Princess and Bergami were separated only by the Countess of Oldi's apartment. All

the Barona balls were given by the Princess. Some of these were attended by people of low condition.

"One day," said witness, "the Princess asked me, 'How can we dress these young virgins, Mr. Sacchi? Do you believe they are such?' I answered that I believed them to be modest girls. Then Her Royal Highness said to me, 'I know, you rogue, that you have gone to bed with three of them, and how many times have you had intercourse with them?' I was surprised at the compliment and said the Princess was deceived. Bergami who was present laughed and said, 'It is true. It is true.'"

At Carlsruhe, stated witness, the allocation of rooms was again altered by the Princess, so that her rooms and those of Bergami were as near as possible. At Monte Falcone, being overtaken by a violent thunderstorm, the party halted at a wretched inn. Here the Princess and Bergami went to a room where there was a bed, and remained there until the rest of the suite arrived an hour and a half later. At the Villa Brandi, witness saw Bergami at midnight leave his room and go to the door which led to the apartment of Her Royal Highness. He opened the door, entered, and though witness watched for an hour Bergami did not return. The same thing happened a few days later. The Princess and her suite travelled by night from Rome to Senegaglia. The Princess and Bergami travelled together in a carriage. When witness went to the carriage in the morning to draw curtains, he found the occupants asleep, but in postures that were highly compromising.

Sacchi's evidence had made a considerable impression. Brougham undertook the task of reducing it to its proper significance.

Witness told him that he had been fourteen months in England. He admitted that in Milan he was known as Sacchini, and in London as Milane. He also went by another name which he did not wish to disclose. He was also known as a count. Then he began to involve himself in contradictions and gave two reasons for his presence in England. First he said he came to England in the service of a Spanish family ; and then gave as his reason, that he left the Continent because of a lawsuit. Asked what sum he had for going to Lausanne, he replied, " Fifty napoleons."

" Did you never say you had more ?" asked counsel.

" I may have said so," he replied, " but I never had."

Then he was asked : " Did you never say you were in a miserable situation, and tax yourself with ingratitude to the Princess ?"

" Never."

" Were you ever in a distressed condition ?"

" No."

" Did you never ask anyone to take compassion on you ?"

" *It may be so.*"

Witness was shown three letters which he identified as his own. These letters clearly contradicted the witness's spoken evidence, for in them he blamed himself for his ingratitude to the Princess.

After the further cross-examination of the first witness Majocchi, the Solicitor-General rose to sum up the evidence in support of the Bill. In the course of his speech, Copley, who was a brilliant advocate, made a spirited protest against the calumnies which had been spread abroad against counsel who were supporting the Bill.

“I and my learned friends have been accused,” he said, “with scattering calumnies abroad, and throwing dirt against the character of the Queen.” They had throughout stated nothing which they had reason to believe would not be satisfactorily proved. If calumnies had been uttered they belonged to another quarter; that quarter alone ought to be called upon to account for them. When he and those with him were thus charged with scattering calumnies, which he now scornfully repelled, they felt themselves entitled to retort upon the real authors. Those who charged counsel with being supporters of perjury, and who charged every witness who appeared at their Lordship’s bar with being both a calumniator and a perjurer,—let them be called upon to answer and not they who were the victims of them.

At the close of the case in support of the Bill, it was decided to adjourn the hearing until October 3rd, it being now the 9th of September.

When the House of Lords met again after the adjournment to resume the hearing of the Trial of the Queen, public interest in the case reached its culminating point. The opportunity for which Brougham had long waited was now at hand. The bar of the House of Lords was a rostrum from which he could address, not only the Lords, but every elector in the land. The Queen’s case was the best card that had fallen into the hands of his party during the long years of their sojourn in the wilderness. The injured and persecuted Queen was a popular idol. The City Fathers loudly demonstrated their affection for her. The craftsmen in different trades organized processions in her honour. The seamen of the Navy were known to be her loyal adherents, while there was open dis-

affection in the Army at the action of the Government in bringing in this Bill of Pains and Penalties.

A zealous partizan, Brougham saw in the present situation a golden chance of carrying his party to triumph on this high tide of popular enthusiasm; of revenging himself on the King for his base desertion of the Whigs; of bringing the timorous Whig nobles into line; and lastly, though this was a minor consideration, of obtaining justice for Caroline.

Rarely had a cause a more powerful advocate. Never had an advocate a more popular cause. Brougham seized his opportunity with both hands, and on the morning of October 3rd, 1820, began the speech in defence of the Queen which endures as a classic of forensic eloquence.

In a statement of the duties of an advocate, he uttered a veiled threat that must have made members of the King's party who heard it uneasy and apprehensive.

"I assure your Lordships," he said, "that the case against the Queen not only does not require a survey of the conduct pursued by her illustrious consort, but imposes on me the necessity of silence in this respect. If hereafter the chances to which every case is exposed should require me to change my resolution, let not any man suppose that I or even the youngest member of the profession would hesitate to stand forward and fearlessly discharge our duty. It is the duty of an advocate to save his client by all expedient means, to protect him at all hazards, and to the injury of all others, if it be necessary. Even patriotism itself must not be permitted to interfere with the obligation by which he is bound to his client. He must go on reckless of what may happen, even though it should

be his fate to involve his country in confusion by the process to which he is bound to resort."

This was no idle threat. In his opening speech Brougham had hinted to the Lords that he had a disclosure to make which would have torn the Bill of Pains and Penalties to shreds. But he intended to use this only as a last resort. Had he exploded this mine the King's position on the Throne would have been threatened and revolution might have followed.

Brougham admitted, and he invited opposing counsel to take full benefit of the admission, that the Queen left this country and resided abroad, and that her acquaintance there was mostly with foreigners inferior in rank to those she associated with here. The reason he adduced for this was not flattering to his audience.

"The charge against her is," he said, "that she resided abroad instead of at home, and that she associated with Italians instead of the Peers and Peeresses of England. But who," he asked, looking round at the Peers spiritual and temporal, "are they that charge her? You, my Lords, should be the last persons to fling such a charge against her,—you, who now presume to sit as her judges, and who are at the same time the witnesses upon whom she must call to explain the grounds and reasons of her departure. You all know well, my Lords, how in her prosperity she opened the door of her palace to your entrance, and condescended to court your society. You know well that as long as it suited purposes not of hers but of others, Her Majesty did not court that society in vain. But when other views arose, and when at last that lust of power and place to which she was

bound to fall a victim was satisfied, then she opened her doors in vain,—then she courted your society without success. I say, then, that it is not here we should meet with accusations against Her Majesty for leaving England.”

Then came a moving passage in which Brougham depicted the sorrows and humiliations of the Queen.

“While she was still suffering from the injuries inflicted on her, she had one support in the affliction, that she still possessed the grateful, respectful, undiminished duty of her only child. When the marriage of that child was afterwards contemplated, no announcement was made to the Queen of this projected alliance. All England, all Europe were looking on; it was announced to England and to Europe, but there was one person in the world to whom no notice was given, and that person was the mother of the bride. And what had she done to deserve this treatment from the Illustrious Person at the head of the Government? She had proved that she was not guilty of the charge he had brought against her, and that his servants had been raised to office by courting her favour.

When the marriage was celebrated still no notice was taken of the mother. She heard it accidentally from a courier who was going with the intelligence to the Pope, that ancient, devoted and valuable ally of the Protestant Crown of England.

The hope that that marriage would still be the fruitful source of heirs to the British Crown remained for some time to comfort the mother of the bride, but the whole of that period elapsed without one communication to the Princess of Wales. An event took place soon after, which plunged the whole of England in the deepest grief,—a grief in which all foreign nations



sympathized. The event was communicated by special messenger to each country, but the person who in all the world was most interested in the knowledge, received no communication. Overwhelmed and stunned as her feelings must have been under any circumstances, they were left to be stunned and overwhelmed by hearing it accidentally. The death of the daughter was communicated to the mother by the appointment of the Milan Commission."

Then followed an exhaustive and merciless analysis of the evidence in support of the Bill.

He showed that a considerable proportion of the statements made in the opening speech of the Attorney-General had not been proved. Then he showed how strangely the chief actors in the drama had behaved,—according to the stories of witnesses. If the evidence was to be believed, they flung off all regard to decency, and all ordinary prudence and gave way to guilty passion. Nay more, the parties themselves had done everything possible to ensure detection. When they kissed on board ship, the whole company was assembled to see it. Such firm and faithful allies to their accusers appeared more than willing to do the finishing kindness for their foes, and grant each other the last favour in the presence of the witnesses.

Then followed a denunciation of the underhand dealings of the Milan Commission, and the methods employed of drilling the witnesses. He also drew an elaborate parallel between the present proceedings and the divorce of Henry VIII, in which he showed that when the Tudor King sought the opinion of the universities of Europe on the lawfulness of his first marriage the doctors of the Italian universities signed an unanimous opinion in the King's favour. Needless

to say this opinion was generously paid for. In the present case the remuneration of the Italian witnesses had been equally generous, and they had been equally accommodating in giving the evidence that was desired.

He implored the Lords never to dismiss from their minds the two grand points upon which he relied : first, that they had not proved facts by credible witnesses, who were within their reach ; and secondly, that the witnesses they had called were unworthy of credit.

“ Your Lordships will recollect,” he continued, in a passage which produced an electrical effect upon his hearers, “ that passage in the Sacred Writings in which the conspiracy of the Elders against the virtuous Susanna is described in language at once eloquent and poetical. The hearts of the Elders were turned away from heaven to the purposes of unjust judgment. Their story was clear, consistent, uncontradicted, and their victim was only rescued from the plot which was laid against her by the contradictory evidence of the Elders, in the trifling particulars of the holm and the tamarisk tree.”

Then came the peroration. A moment before the hushed House had listened to the sturdy advocate and brilliant dialectician. Now his bearing was altered. The voice rang out but in more solemn tones. His manner was that of the prophet warning the people to turn from evil ways.

“ My Lords, I pray your Lordships to pause,” he exclaimed in accents of solemn dignity. “ You are standing upon the brink of a precipice. You may go on in your precipitate career—you may pronounce judgment against the Queen, but it will be the last judgment you will ever pronounce. Her persecutors will fail in their object, and the ruin with which they seek

to cover the Queen will return to overwhelm themselves. Save the country, my Lords, from the horrors that await it,—save yourselves from impending ruin,—rescue the country of which you are now the ornament, but in which you will flourish no longer, when you are severed from the people, like the blossoms that are cut off from the tree. Save the country, my Lords, that you may continue to adorn it. Save the Crown that is in jeopardy—the aristocracy which it shakes—the altar itself which never more can stand secure amidst the shocks that rend its kindred throne. You have said, you have willed—the Church and King have willed that the Queen should be deprived of its solemn service, but instead of that solemnity she has the heartfelt prayers of the people. She needs no prayers of mine. But for my country I here pour forth my supplications to the throne of mercy, that that mercy may be poured down on the people in a larger measure than the merits of their rulers deserve, and that your hearts may be turned to justice.”

This oration was the crowning achievement of Brougham’s career. Its effect on the House was profound, and for several minutes after the speaker sank into his seat the House sat in silence. Enemies as well as friends hailed it as the greatest speech they had ever heard. For months past the atmosphere had been polluted by the poison-gas disseminated by Italian witnesses. Brougham’s speech came as an invigorating breeze that cleared the air. It intensified the popular devotion to the Queen and Brougham became the hero of the hour. Even the Tadpoles and Tapers in the clubs ceased talking for a while about the King and his latest mistress, and discussed the effects of Brougham’s speech.

Creevey, who in his secret soul believed that Brougham was half mad, was enraptured with the address. "I never heard anything like the perfection he has displayed in all ways. He concluded with a most magnificent address to the Lords—an exhortation to them to save themselves—the Church—the Crown—the Country, by their decision in favour of the Queen. This last appeal was made with great passion, but without a particle of rant."

In a further entry he says: "We went to Brooks's at night, where as you may suppose the *monde* talked of nothing but Brougham and his fame, and the comers-in from White's said the same feeling was equally strong there. The speech not only astonished him (the Duke of Norfolk) but has shaken the aristocracy."

"The town is still in an uproar about the Trial and nobody has any doubt that it will finish by the Bill being thrown out and the Ministers turned out," writes Greville in October 1820,—three months after the trial began.

"Brougham's speech for the defence," he says, "was the most magnificent display of argument and oratory that has been heard for years, and they say the impression it made upon the House was immense; even his most violent opponents (including Lord Lonsdale) were struck with admiration and astonishment. . . . Since I have been in the world I never remember any question which so exclusively occupied everybody's attention, and so completely absorbed man's thoughts and engrossed conversation. In the same degree is the violence displayed. It is taken up as a party question entirely and the consequence is that everybody has gone mad about it."

Williams's speech on behalf of the Queen came as

something like an anti-climax after Brougham's full-dress oration. Though in quite a different style to his leader's it was none the less effective and valuable. He pointed out that the Queen had been deprived of all the securities which in a court of criminal law were interposed to protect the accused. She was called upon to meet charges spread over six years without any specification of time or place. He also reminded the Lords that the prosecution, in addition to having unlimited funds at their disposal, had received assistance from the Government of the countries where evidence had been obtained. Whilst at the same time every obstacle and difficulty had been placed in the way of the Queen's agents in collecting evidence by these Governments.

He reminded the House of an instance of this interference when the Queen's advisers had tried to get the evidence of the Chamberlain of the Grand Duke of Baden, to rebut the testimony of the chambermaid Barbara Kress. An autograph letter from the Queen had been sent to this witness. But the Chamberlain replied that though he was most anxious to testify he had orders from the Grand Duke not to do so. In conclusion, Williams promised that the witnesses who were to be called would dispose once and for all of the "bedroom topography and apocryphal keyholes of the Italian servants."

Witnesses for the defence were now called. Colonel St. Leger deposed that he had been Chamberlain to the Queen for eleven years, and that he had resigned this office on account of ill-health.

The Earl of Guilford stated that he met the Queen at Naples in March 1815. The Hon. Keppel Craven, Sir William Gell and Dr. Holland were then in her

suite. He remembered Bergami who was then a courier. He arrived at Naples with Lady Charlotte Lindsay. He afterwards visited the Queen in Rome. At Civita Vecchia he and Lady Charlotte Lindsay formed part of the Queen's party. Some time later he dined with the Queen at the Villa d'Este. Everything he saw was decidedly respectable and proper. He denied in cross-examination that he ever saw the Queen and Bergami in the grotto at the Villa d'Este, nor did he ever see any impropriety of conduct between them.

The Earl of Glenbervie, who dined frequently with Her Royal Highness at Genoa, gave similar testimony.

Lady Charlotte Lindsay who was next called said that she first entered the service of Her Royal Highness in 1808 and attended her when she went abroad in 1814. She was one of the Ladies of the Bedchamber. She stayed with the Princess at Brunswick, joined her again at Naples in March 1815. From Naples she accompanied her to Rome, thence to Civita Vecchia, embarked with her on the *Clorinde* and quitted her at Leghorn according to the arrangement she had made. Witness stated that the Princess was visited by all the English of distinction and the Italian nobility in Naples, and gave a long list of people of distinction who had called. On the *Clorinde* the Princess slept in part of the Captain's cabin, which was divided into two. The Princess's maid also slept in the part appropriated to Her Royal Highness. Lady Charlotte also remembered Bergami who always acted in the way of a servant to a mistress. She never observed any impropriety between the Princess and Bergami. Nor had she seen them walking together. She had many times seen Bergami in attendance on the Princess, but he

always walked behind her in the respectful attitude of a servant. Lady Charlotte quitted the service of the Princess in 1817. In cross-examination Lady Charlotte pointed out that foreigners are more familiar and affable with their servants than English people.

The Earl of Llandaff, next examined, said that in December 1814 he and the Countess were in Naples and frequently visited the house of the Princess and dined there at least twice a week, and also attended many evening parties that she gave. He never saw any impropriety in her conduct. He afterwards met the Princess in Venice. Bergami, whom he saw many times, appeared to be a modest well-behaved man.

The Honourable Keppel Craven, the next witness, said that he had been one of the chamberlains of the Princess, and in that capacity travelled with her to the Continent in 1814. He remained with her more than six months. In answer to questions why he left her, he stated that when he entered the service of the Princess he did not expect to stay with her more than three months. In fact, he stayed four months longer than he had originally intended. When Mr. Craven found that the Princess required a courier, he applied to the Grand Chamberlain of the Emperor of Austria to find one, who recommended a person whom he afterwards found was Bergami. The Marquis Ghesliari strongly recommended Bergami, and said that he had known his family a long time, and wished to obtain a good situation for him. Witness attended the Princess at all the concerts, masked balls and theatrical performances she attended in Naples. She stayed to the end of each entertainment. Her dress at the masked ball when she appeared as the Genius

of History was proper and becoming and in no way indecent. Witness never observed any impropriety of conduct between the Princess and Bergami.

The Solicitor-General subjected Mr. Craven to a close and rigorous cross-examination, but the witness was not to be rattled, and more than once neatly turned the tables on his skilful tormentor.

"Did you ever state," asked counsel, "that you had made a representation to Her Royal Highness as to what had been observed with respect to Her Royal Highness and Bergami on the terrace of the garden attached to the house at Naples?"

"I did so. I mentioned it to a person at Naples. It was with regard to what I had observed."

"Have the goodness then to state what it was that you saw, and that you represented?"

"I saw Her Royal Highness walking in the garden and Bergami was near. I knew there was a spy in the garden. I had had information about it from England. That being the case I thought it necessary to caution Her Royal Highness with regard to any outward appearances that might be misconstrued." Craven stated that when Bergami attended the Princess in the garden he walked a little way behind in the manner of a well-trained servant.

Sir William Gell, the next witness, confirmed Mr. Craven's testimony, and spoke in high terms of Bergami.

All the witnesses so far had been giving evidence as to character. Counsel now brought forward witnesses to tender evidence rebutting the charges the prosecution had made.

The first of these was William Carrington who had been nine years in the service of Sir William Gell,



Carrington said that he attended his master in Naples in 1814 and lived in the house of the Princess. The first night he arrived in Naples Bergami slept in a small room over that of the steward, Mr. Sicard. As this room was so small that he could not stand upright in it, Bergami was allotted another with a higher ceiling. This room was about sixty feet from the apartment of the Princess. Between the two rooms there were three other rooms and a passage. These intervening rooms were all occupied.

Carrington said that he knew Majocchi and had seen him at Ruffinelli. He had heard him speak of Ompteda.

The Attorney-General objected to witness recalling what Majocchi had said to him as Majocchi had not been examined on the point. A long legal argument followed, and the Judges withdrew to decide the point of law. Majocchi was recalled, and again, as when he first gave evidence, took refuge in ignorance and his famous formula *non mi ricordo*.

But Carrington was unshaken by Majocchi's denials and professions of ignorance. He said that the Italian told him that Baron Ompteda got false keys made of the Princess's rooms at Como. The Italian further said that the Baron had brought the servants of the house under suspicion, and that if the Princess would give him permission he would kill the Hanoverian Baron like a dog.

The charges counsel for the Queen had brought against this titled Government spy caused alarm to the prosecutors, and the Solicitor-General in cross-examination tried in every way to get Carrington to withdraw or qualify his evidence. But Carrington refused to vary his statements in any way.

The next witness, John Whitcombe, corroborated

the previous witness's evidence as to the position of Bergami's bedroom. He also showed that the principal witness for the Government was a woman of easy morals. Demont had sworn that she slept alone every night, and all night at Naples. Whitcombe testified that he had frequently been alone with her in her bedroom, "late as well as early."

John Jacob Sicard, the *maître d'hôtel* of the Princess, stated that he had been twenty-one years in her service. He said he was responsible for the sleeping arrangements, and arranged where Bergami had to sleep. As to Bergami's walking behind the Princess there was nothing notable in that. He had frequently accompanied her himself. The Princess frequently conversed with the servants, and "she was uncommon kind even to a fault."

Dr. Holland swore that he had never seen anything improper or indecent in the behaviour of the Princess, and said that he left her service to make a tour of Switzerland and to attend to his own private affairs.

Charles Mills, an English resident in Rome, who frequently dined with the Princess and attended her parties, also swore that he had never seen the slightest impropriety in her conduct.

The next witness, Joseph Fiwle, a man of noble birth, formerly Colonel of the Staff of the Viceroy of Italy, had known Bergami for many years. His brother was General of a Brigade which included the corps to which Bergami belonged. He spoke of Bergami as a good military man of irreproachable character.

Lieutenant John Flynn of the Royal Navy, the next witness, said that the Princess gave him the command

of the polacre in which she voyaged to Constantinople and other places. He fitted up the cabins in this vessel according to his own discretion, and stated that in any situation in which the beds were placed it was impossible for the Princess and Bergami to see each other. Flynn said that he was very frequently called by the Princess to her cabin to receive instructions. The tent on deck was within three or four feet of the steersman, who could hear any conversation within it. There was a passage along the deck beside the tent which members of the crew constantly passed along. The Princess frequently called Flynn at night when she was sleeping on deck, and in order to hear her clearly he had to open the tent. The Lieutenant never saw the slightest impropriety nor indecency in the conduct of the Princess to Bergami, but he admitted that he did not know where the latter slept.

Lieutenant Howman stated that he joined the Princess at Genoa in 1816. He accompanied her during her voyage to the East. Bergami at Tunis did not sleep near the Princess. Her room was not on the same story. The tent on deck was the awning of the ship, and was a single tent with the exception of a partial covering round it. It could be easily opened from the outside. Howman did not know whether the Princess slept there alone. She slept on a sofa. He never saw any bed-clothes there. He never saw any indecent or improper conduct between the Princess and anyone else. Howman heard that Baron Ompteda, who had often enjoyed the hospitality of the Princess, had bribed a servant to break into desks and secretares in her house. On learning this he challenged Ompteda to a duel, but the Princess forbade the meeting.

In cross-examination he greatly disconcerted the Queen's friends by remarking bluntly :

"I have heard and believe that he (Bergami) slept under the tent."

This statement by one of their own witnesses probably did more injury to the Queen's case than any other evidence given on either side, and Howman left the bar mortified by the thought that he had damaged the cause he meant to serve.

But Brougham soon had a chance of scoring heavily off the other side and he took the fullest advantage of it. A master builder Garolini was called to give evidence. He stated that he carried out important alterations at the Villa d'Este under the direction of an architect. His bill amounted altogether to 145,000 livres. When that bill was due he saw Raſtelli, who asked what his bill against the Princess was. He said that after deducting what he had received it amounted to 45,000 livres. Raſtelli told him that he had been after witnesses in Italy. At this point counsel for the Government, who had taken alarm at the mention of Raſtelli's name, entered a strong objection to the questions. But Williams, who was examining the witness, suavely pointed out that Raſtelli in evidence had admitted he was employed by the Milan Commission, and he therefore wished to show how he carried out his duties. A long legal wrangle ensued, but eventually Williams had his way. Garolini then stated that Raſtelli asked him to give him the bill, and he would try to get him paid by the Milan Commission, if the Princess did not settle the account.

The Solicitor-General treated this witness to a searching examination, but he came through the ordeal triumphantly. He said that he had been paid nothing

for coming to London, but admitted candidly that he had agreed with General Pino that he was to have 2100 francs for loss of time and business which at Michaelmas was considerable. The bill due to him by the Princess had been paid eighteen months ago.

As soon as the master builder left the bar, Brougham turned to the Attorney-General and inquired whether Raſtelli was accessible or not. In short, whether he was in the country or not ; as he wished to call him and put some questions to him.

The Attorney-General was evasive, and apparently unwilling to answer Brougham's question. He suggested that his friend should first satisfy their Lordships of the necessity of calling him ; at which Brougham pointed out that no purpose would be served by asking for permission to call a witness who was possibly abroad.

As the prosecuting counsel continued to fence, the Lords, who sensed a disclosure, became restless and suspicious. There were angry murmurs.

Then the Lord Chancellor, always quick to see the way the wind was blowing, politely but firmly told the Attorney-General to state plainly where Raſtelli was.

The Attorney-General then admitted that Raſtelli had been sent to Milan, as courier with despatches.

"Is it possible," asked Brougham with an air of astonishment, "that a person who has been examined as a witness for the prosecution has been sent out of the country in the service of the Milan Commission ? My learned friend, or rather those who instruct him, must have seen that in the course of my cross-examination of Raſtelli I laid the foundation for his refutation ; and they who defended him should have had him

ready to be produced whenever he might be called. If there is anything that ought not to have been done in this prosecution, it is the sending of Raſtelli out as an agent in this Milan Commission."

So far Brougham had spoken quietly. Now he bridled like an angry maſtiff, and in a voice tremulous with passion exclaimed, "I wiſh to know, my Lords, whether under theſe circumſtances, after it is made known to you that this individual, whoſe conduct has been ſo ſtrangely implicated, has been ſent out to Milan,—I ſay, my Lords, I wiſh to know whether I am obliged to go on with this Bill?"

The effect of this rhetorical bombſhell was amazing. The Houſe of Lords, the calmest and moſt dignified aſſembly in the world, became a cauldron of bubbling paſſion. Government ſupporters hurled threats and imprecations at their political opponents, while the Queen's ſupporters clamoured for the withdrawal of the Bill.

A long and exacting debate followed after which it was agreed, on the motion of Earl Grey, to call Mr. Powell of the Milan Commission to the bar next day.

Powell explained to the Lords that Raſtelli had been ſent to Italy with meſſages to the friends of wiſneſſes. He had ordered him to return by the 3rd of October (it was now the 12th), but he added that he had no power to enforce the attendance of this man.

After hearing Powell, counſel for the Queen held a conſultation as to their courſe of action when they decided to proceed with the caſe.

The next wiſneſs, Phillipi Pami, a carpenter who had worked at the Villa d'Eſte, ſaid he knew Raſtelli. Laſt year Raſtelli made him a preſent of 40 francs, and

later offered him money to come to London as a witness. Rastelli also said that if he had anything to say against the Princess he would receive a great present.

At a second interview Rastelli told witness that Miss Demont though still in the service of the Princess was offering evidence, and had already received a great sum. After being repeatedly urged to give evidence, Pami replied that he had lived night and day for a long time in the Princess's house, and had never seen anything improper.

Another Italian witness, Tomaso Maggiori, described himself as a fisherman, and said that he had many times taken the Princess and Bergami out on the lake. He never saw any familiarities between them; certainly no kissing. The Princess always sat at a distance from her attendant. At night there were always lights in the boat.

Chevalier Carlo Vassali, equerry to the Queen, was then sworn. He first met the Princess at a dinner at the house of General Pino. Bergami was also a member of the dinner-party. This was at the end of 1816. He was then invited to join the suite of the Princess, and had remained in her service ever since, and had accompanied her on her travels. He had had the fullest opportunities of observing the behaviour of the Princess and Bergami, but had never seen anything improper in their conduct to each other. He never saw them walking or riding without attendance. Everywhere they travelled Bergami was received at the tables of families of distinction. At Munich he dined with the King of Bavaria, who presented him with a gold snuff-box. He also dined with the Grand Duke of Baden at Carlsruhe. Every day during her stay

at Carlsruhe the Princess was either at Court or attending public functions. It was impossible that the incidents described by the German chambermaid could have taken place, as functionaries of the Grand Duke's Court were always in attendance. The Chevalier also went from Charnitz to Innsbruck with Bergami for passports. When they returned the Princess did not receive Bergami alone,—as stated by Demont. Witness went to her room with Bergami, and the Countess of Oldi and others were also present.

The next witness, Madame Martini, a shopkeeper at Morge, said that she had known Miss Demont, the witness for the prosecution, for many years. In conversation she suggested to Demont that the Princess of Wales was a libertine, which she then believed to be true. At this remark Demont fell into a great passion, and said it was nothing but calumny, invented by her enemies in order to ruin her. Demont went on to say that she had never observed anything of the Princess but what was good; that since she quitted England she had been surrounded with spies; and that her every action, even the simplest, was misinterpreted.

After a protest by Brougham that it was impossible to complete the Queen's case owing to the absence of Raſtelli, and the refusal of the Grand Duke of Baden to allow his Chamberlain to give evidence, Denman rose to sum up the defence.

The final speeches for and against the Bill are admirable examples of attack and defence, especially those of Denman and Solicitor-General Copley. Denman's address was particularly impressive, and made a profound impression on the Peers who heard it. Like Brougham, he was an orator, and in his



reasons which have just been noticed, becoming reconciled to the law, or at least passive.

But along with this contented and conforming majority, there worked a zealous body of the nonconforming remnant of the old Covenanters, whose opinions varied in shades of depth from an imperceptible distaste of the uniform conformity of their brethren, to that confirmed disgust which had made a small number cut themselves off from the body whose conduct occasioned it. A large number even of those who remained among the most steadily-attached members of the Establishment were, like the historian Wodrow, deeply impregnated with the spirit of the old Covenanters, and entertained the vain notion that, as comfortable and authoritative members of a well-endowed establishment, they would possess the same spiritual command, and awful moral majesty, which their covenanting fathers obtained as attributes of the crown of martyrdom.

tion by the church. They saw that by this act the *acceptance* of presentation within six months was necessary to its being sustained, and they prohibited licentiates from taking presentations. In the year 1725 I find Mr George Blaikie deprived of his license for taking a presentation. In this way the *jus devolutum* necessarily took effect."—*Report*, p. 87. The statement that the provisions were hailed with satisfaction, must be understood as limited to the then anti-patronage party in the church. On further explanations about the case of Mr Blaikie being desired, it was stated, on the authority of the records of the presbytery of Haddington, that he was deprived of his license in 1725, for having had "the assurance" to accept of an unconditional presentation. Eleven years afterwards, Mr Blaikie conducted a war on this question with the presbytery of Auchterarder—a place destined to repeated celebrity in connection with such questions. He had accepted a presentation from Lord Duplin, to the church of Maderty, in that presbytery. He did so, not only unconditionally, but apparently in a spirit of bravado, as one who desired to fight out his old dispute. The presbytery, not content with the exercise of their own immediate authority, applied to the presbytery of Perth, where Mr Blaikie resided, desiring them to punish a licentiate within their bounds as a "transgressor of the good order of this church, and as a contemner of the authority of the last National Assembly, and of two recommendations of this provincial synod, the design of all which is to discourage violent settlements, and undue acceptance of presentations, without the consent and concurrence of the parish previously notified." The end of the dispute was, that Mr Blaikie was a second time deprived of his

It had been reported to counsel for the Queen that the sailor prince had been exerting his personal influence with his fellow-Peers to induce them to vote for the Bill.

“I have heard, my Lords, that while we are defending Her Majesty, there are persons, not in a low capacity, not of the public press, but who have seats among your Lordships, who are industriously circulating injurious reports against the Queen.”

Then dramatically pointing his finger at the Duke, who was sitting in the Gallery immediately in front of him, Denman continued: “Could I, my Lords, call on that individual, I would say, ‘Come forth, thou foul slanderer and meet me face to face; if thou dost not, thou art worse than the Italian who gives a perjured but an open testimony, whilst thou pourest thy infectious calumnies into the ears of thy brother judges and plungest into the breast of a Royal victim a poisoned stiletto in the semblance of the sword of justice. Were it possible that any of the Blood Royal could do this, I would say he had done more to degrade himself from the succession to the Crown than my Royal Mistress would have done had every charge been proved against her.’”

In his winding-up speech for the prosecution the Attorney-General (Sir Robert Gifford) attacked the weakest point of the Queen’s case,—the evidence of the two naval lieutenants, one of whom expressed his belief that the Princess and Bergami had slept under the same tent aboard the polacre during the voyage from Palestine. He claimed that the evidence of Lieutenant Flynn had been blown to atoms, whilst the admissions of Howman were ten times more ruinous to the defence than the miserable exhibition of Flynn. Finally, he

commented forcibly on the methods of Brougham and Denman.

“In the bitterness of their attack,” he said, “the Monarch had not been spared, the annals of corrupt Rome had been ransacked, and the most detested of Roman tyrants had been brought forward as a parallel with the Monarch of a free country. Had the Queen been innocent, there would have been no necessity for this. Innocence can secure its own defence without recrimination.”

After the closing speeches of counsel the House of Lords adjourned, and met again two days later to deliberate on the Bill.

In the course of a short summing-up the Lord Chancellor, one of the promoters of the Bill, admitted that there had been a much greater facility in the production of witnesses for the prosecution than in support of the defence. He also granted that there might have been corrupt endeavours to procure evidence, and that was another circumstance of which the accused ought doubtless to have the benefit, not only as regarded the witnesses who were the objects of that corruption, but as regarded others on whom it might throw a reasonable suspicion.

The venerable Lord Erskine, one of the greatest lawyers of his generation, in opening the debate on the Bill, said that immediately on the death of George III, and before it could have reached the ears of the Queen, an act was done by His Majesty's ministers which deprived her of the prayers of the Church, and yet the Lord Chancellor had contended that no person ought to be considered guilty until proved so, and that no opinion should be stated to the disadvantage of the accused until the day of trial was arrived.

When that act was done he felt assured that they must have been prepared with a case against the Queen, which would not admit of being answered. Instead, they were presented with a mass of papers on which the Bill of Pains and Penalties was founded. Even if he thought the Queen guilty, as he now believed her innocent from the evidence, still he would never have given his support to the Bill of Pains and Penalties when a constitutional remedy was open to them. He maintained that the Bill was foreign to the spirit of our Constitution.

Lord Erskine was proceeding to comment on the evidence, when suddenly he fainted, and he was carried from the House by some of his fellow-Peers. The next day, having fully recovered, he resumed the interrupted speech. He believed that the case of conspiracy had been made out. The depositions taken at Milan ought to have been produced, to contrast them with the evidence before the House. In short, everything was wanting necessary to do justice to the unfortunate Lady who had none to protect her; against whom every power was in array; whose husband was in a situation that he could not show his face against her.

This case had begun in corruption; had been carried on by perjury; and if it triumphed, it would be the triumph of foul injustice and cruelty.

Earl Grosvenor in the course of a long speech declared that he could not see that these charges against the Queen, which had been so cruelly and maliciously accumulated, were at all substantiated. Like Lord Erskine, he referred to the prejudgment of the Queen's case, by the exclusion of her name from the Liturgy. He had heard, that when the Liturgy was carried by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the

King, it was the King who struck out the name of Her Majesty. "But if," continued the speaker warmly, "I had been the Archbishop of Canterbury on such an occasion, I would have thrown the Liturgy in His Majesty's face before I would have been a party to such a fraud upon the law, such an outrage on all justice and humanity."

Lord Lauderdale, who had throughout the Trial acted as an unofficial prosecuting counsel, supported the Second Reading of the Bill, as also did that sturdy henchman of the King, Lord Donoughmore.

Amongst those who spoke against the Bill were Lord Harewood, Lord Arden, Lord Falmouth, the Duke of Somerset, Lord Rosslyn, and the Marquis of Stafford.

There was much speculation in political circles as to how Lord Grey, the leader of the old Whigs, would vote. During the debates in the earlier proceedings of the Trial he had generally adopted a neutral attitude, and the Prime Minister had been at pains to consult him whenever a knotty point arose. One of the brilliant and persuasive orators of his age, Grey was moreover a man of the highest integrity, who scornfully stood aside when the more advanced members of his party sought to make political capital out of the tribulation of the Queen. Those benefactors of posterity, Greville and Creevey, as well as their friends and acquaintances, were all on the tiptoe of expectation when it was known that Grey would explain his position.

He did not keep them long in suspense. On the second day of this historical debate, he spoke and made one of the most powerful and convincing speeches against the Bill. He explained that at the outset of

the case his feelings and opinions were unfavourable to the Queen, and he expected such a case would have been made out as would have compelled him to vote for the Bill.

The Duke of Newcastle showed a keen sense of his judicial responsibilities by explaining to an admiring House that he had not heard the case for the defence, but he was prepared to vote for the Bill, and was of opinion that the full penalties following the preamble should be inflicted.

The Marquis of Lansdowne strongly reprobated the principles of the Duke who was prepared to give a vote without a knowledge of the evidence.

The next day (Nov. 6th), after many speeches for and against the Bill, the House divided on the Second Reading, when the figures were—For the Bill, 123 ; against 95. The Government thus secured a majority of 28.

The King's brothers, the Dukes of York and Clarence, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, voted in the majority, which was largely composed of the representative elective Peers of Scotland and Ireland.

The next day Lord Dacre laid before the House of Lords a protest from the Queen against the Bill of Pains and Penalties.

The Bill had now reached the Committee stage. It was soon seen that there was a split in the Government ranks. Some of the bishops were opposed to the divorce clause. A division on the question being taken, 129 voted to retain the clause, and 62 against. In this division the Whigs voted with the Government, as they wished the Bill to remain intact until it received a Third Reading.

Friday, November the 10th, was the day appointed

for the Third Reading of the Bill. London was mad with excitement. Great crowds assembled round the Houses of Parliament, and for many it was a general holiday. Even in the Chamber where the final scene in this historical drama was being acted, the players were labouring under unwonted emotions. The House was thronged to suffocation. In her seat near the throne sat the Queen, obviously struggling to control her nerves. The counsel in the case were all present, while beyond the bar was an eager crowd of fashionable spectators. For an hour or two the vast audience listened to the speeches with close attention. Then impatient cries were heard. The time for argument was past. All were eager to know the fate of the Bill. At last the Lord Chancellor's speech ended, strangers were ordered to withdraw, and the division was taken. When, after a short interval, the figures were announced, it was found that 108 Peers had voted for the Third Reading, with 99 against, thus giving the Government the narrow majority of nine. This time only eight of "those villains of the Church," as Creevey called the bishops, voted with the Government.

This result was a deadly blow to the Government, and a triumph for the Queen, for even this insignificant majority had been gained by drumming up the two sets of representative Peers, the Royal Dukes and Peers who basked in the sunshine of the King's favour.

Lord Liverpool realized that the Bill was doomed. Amid a scene of tremendous excitement he rose after the figures were announced, and said that as the majority in favour of the Bill was so small, and as the public sentiment had been expressed so decidedly against the measure, he could not consistently with

his duty to the country press the Bill any further. He therefore moved "That the Bill be read this day six months," which, of course, meant its final abandonment, and a virtual acquittal for the Queen of England.

The friends of the Queen were almost delirious with joy. The Opposition Peers hailed the Prime Minister's acknowledgment of defeat with loud cheers, that were quickly taken up by the multitude outside.

That night the City and every district in London was ablaze with illuminations, and every ship in the river gay with bunting. In the clubs high festival was held ; and as post-chaise and gig carried the tidings to town and hamlet, bonfires were lit, bells rang out merry chimes, and the people throughout the length and breadth of England rejoiced at the withdrawal of the detested Bill.

In this the people exhibited a truer sense of moral values than their rulers. For there was more involved in this Bill of Pains and Penalties than the personal honour of a Queen. For the defeat of the Bill meant the restoration of the rule of Law to its station of ancient dignity, and "the end," as Erskine said, "of that horrid and portentous excrescence of a new law, retrospective, cruel and oppressive."



## CHAPTER XV

### THE CORONATION : DEATH OF CAROLINE AND GEORGE IV

**A**FTER the withdrawal of the Bill of Pains and Penalties against the Queen, the next act of the Government was to offer her an allowance of £50,000 a year. This was announced in the King's Speech.

The King, as a financial purist, regarded this as ill-timed generosity, and when he read the passage in the speech from the Throne, he looked in mighty ill-humour, and laid great emphasis on the word "you," as though he would have no part in the business.

The Queen was disposed to accept this allowance, for as she said in a letter to Brougham, she ought not to refuse "the only act of kindness and consideration which the King had shown his subjects since his accession to the Throne." But Brougham and the other leaders of the Radicals finally persuaded her to decline the offer, and sacrifice her own personal interests for the benefit of a political group which whatever its influence in the country was numerically insignificant in Parliament. But the Radicals had championed her cause when the great Whig lords had held aloof, and though she was acute enough to see that they were using her only for their own ends, she allowed Brougham and his friends to bask in the sunshine of her immense personal popularity.

The result of the Queen's Trial exasperated the

King and put him for a while in the worst of tempers. Even his latest mistress, the Marchioness of Conyngham, found it difficult to get him into a good humour. Then the arrangements for the Coronation, which the Government was planning on a magnificent scale, began to engross his attention and for a time Caroline was forgotten. But not for long. Petitions for the restoration of the Queen's rights and privileges poured in from all sides. Many of these were delivered personally to the King, while the House of Commons devoted much time to receiving others. Then Caroline began to assert her own claims, and wrote to the King intimating that she intended to be present at the Coronation. To this and to succeeding letters the King made no answer. He handed them unopened to the Prime Minister, who replied that the King had commanded him to say that it was His Majesty's prerogative to regulate the ceremonial of his Coronation "in such manner as he may think fit, that the Queen can form no part of the ceremonial, except in consequence of a distinct authority from the King, and that it is not His Majesty's intention to give any such authority."

The Queen next appealed to the Privy Council, but with no better success.

The ceremony of the Coronation of George IV was one of the most spectacular pageants ever seen in England, and as might have been expected, with such a monarch, one of the most costly. Four times as much money was spent on it as on the Coronation of Queen Victoria, and the King's robes alone cost £25,000.

The populace, who love a pageant, for once cheered the King heartily, and the ceremonial passed off well.

The only unfortunate incident was the ill-advised attempt of the Queen to force an entrance. When she arrived at the Abbey in a coach and six, attended by Lord Hood, some soldiers barred her entrance. Then Lord Hood exclaimed, "Don't you know your Queen? She needs no ticket." But the official in charge explained that he could admit no one without a ticket. Then Lord Hood tendered his own. But this being non-transferable was declined, and Caroline drove away, followed by the jeers of the onlookers.

History has little more to record of this unfortunate Queen. Her friends declared that this last mortification broke her spirit. Only a few weeks after the Coronation she contracted an acute internal inflammation. Before she had been ill a week it was found that recovery was hopeless. In her dying hours she was attended by her intimate friends, and some who had championed her cause. Lord and Lady Hood, Lady Anne Hamilton, and her counsel, Brougham, Denman, Dr. Lushington and Wilde, were all present. She appeared to have no hope of recovery, and when Brougham told her that her physician was confident that she would be restored to health, she shook her head and said, "I know better, but I don't mind."

Wayward and capricious she may have been in the days of her troubled life, but she never lacked courage or temper. Now as she faced the Unknown she showed a calm dignity and serenity of spirit long remembered by the few who really knew and loved her. She passed away at ten o'clock on the night of August 7th, 1821. In her will she expressed a wish that she should be buried at Brunswick, and that her coffin should bear the inscription: "Here lies Caroline of Brunswick, the injured Queen of England."

The Government, while according the Queen the honours of a "lying in state" and guards of honour, were determined that there should be no public demonstration when the coffin was transported to Brunswick. But it was found impossible to prevent this. The whole country mourned the Queen, and the mob were infuriated by what they regarded as the indecent haste in hurrying on the funeral. To prevent trouble the Government proposed that the funeral procession should not pass through the city. The populace were equally determined that it should. It required a riot in which two men were killed and several wounded to convince Lord Liverpool that the course pursued by the Government was ill-advised.

The news of the Queen's death reached the King at Holyhead, where he was awaiting a favourable wind for his journey to Ireland. He showed no outward respect for her memory and never thought of abandoning his journey. Death had released him from an incubus, after laws and Parliament had failed. "This is one of the happiest moments of my life," he told an astonished audience in Dublin on the day of his arrival.

Thereafter followed a hectic round of processions, reviews, balls, banquets, musical entertainments, and a visit to The Curragh. At every opportunity he spoke of his love for Ireland, said he had an Irish heart, and told the people he met that he never felt sensations of more delight than this visit afforded him.

The warm-hearted Irish people, ever ready to reciprocate a friendly gesture, took him to their hearts. But the hopes kindled by the King's professions of love and friendliness were doomed to disappointment,

and his Irish subjects were soon to learn that his honeyed words were but the effervescence of a shallow emotional nature.

In his mordant lines on "The Irish avatar," Byron summed up the situation with savage mockery :

" Ere the daughter of Brunswick is cold in her grave  
And her ashes still float to her home o'er the tide,  
Lo ! George the triumphant speeds over the wave  
To the long cherished isle—which he loved like his bride.  
Is it madness or meanness which clings to thee now ?  
Were he God—as he is but the commonest clay,  
With scarce fewer wrinkles than sins on his brow,  
Such servile devotion might shame him away.  
Spread, spread for Vitellius the royal repast  
Till the gluttonous despot be stuffed to the gorge,  
And the roar of his drunkards proclaim him at last  
The fourth of the fools and oppressors called George."

During his visit to Scotland, which followed the Irish journey, the King heard of the death of his minister, Lord Londonderry. This meant a change that he dreaded, as the only suitable candidate for the post was Canning, and Canning he did not want. For not only had this eminent statesman refused to identify himself with the Government in prosecuting the Queen, but he had piled injury upon injury by insisting in the Commons that the expenses of the Milan Commission should be paid, not by the State, as Castlereagh had promised, but by the King himself.

But there was no help for it. Canning was, as Liverpool and Wellington pointed out, the only candidate for the vacancy, and so after much bitter complaining on the part of the King he was appointed. The appointment was one of the best the King ever

made, as he was in after years broad-minded enough to admit. But at first Canning's position was anything but enviable. The Duke of Wellington seems to have disliked and distrusted him, and the King who loved intrigue played off one against the other, and rejoiced exceedingly when his little plots occasionally landed his Foreign Minister in hot water. But Canning was not to be deflected by trivial obstructions from the line of duty he had marked out for himself. Ambassadors from foreign Courts had been encouraged to interview the King himself, and they found it easy to get what they wanted and secure British compliance with their schemes.

Canning reintroduced the older constitutional practice, and was not content that England should play the part of the puppet with Metternich pulling the strings. "I wonder," he says in one of his letters, "whether he (Metternich) is aware that private communications with the King of England is wholly at variance with the spirit and practice of the British Constitution. That during his reign of half a century George III never indulged in such communications, and that the custom introduced by Castlereagh survives only by sufferance, and would not stand the test of parliamentary discussion. I should be sorry to do anything at all unpleasant to the King, but it is my duty to be present at every interview between His Majesty and a Foreign Minister."

Canning had his way with the King, and Metternich soon found himself confronted with a mind as subtle and fertile as his own.

On March 27th, 1827, Canning was summoned by the King to the Royal Lodge at Windsor. The Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, had died suddenly ;

Catholic Emancipation which had loomed on the horizon for some years was ripe for settlement, and the political situation was one of extraordinary difficulty. The King, as was his practice when he interviewed statesmen, treated Canning to a long oration in which he expounded his political principles from the time when he first took an interest in politics under the guidance of Charles James Fox. He told Canning that the repugnance with which he had received him into his service in 1822 had not only been completely effaced within a short time of their coming together, but was now changed into sentiments of satisfaction and warm affection, and that Canning had placed this country in a position with respect to Europe in which it had never stood before.

This was gratifying to the statesman, but he wished to know what the King proposed, as he did not see that short of forming an anti-Catholic Government it would be possible to burke the question. Canning expressed himself as favourable to Emancipation, but said that as the question was an open one he could not speak for other ministers.

Finally Canning took office, but his untimely death two months later brought "confusion worse confounded."

After a short interval the Duke of Wellington accepted the Premiership, and from that time onwards the King found in the Duke a refuge from the storms that blew with ever-increasing violence in the last years of his life.

When the King sent for Wellington in 1828, he was then seriously ill. "I found him in bed," says the Duke, "dressed in a dirty silk jacket and a turban night-cap, one as greasy as the other; for notwith-

standing his coquetry about dress in public, he was extremely dirty and slovenly in private."

The Duke soon discovered that he had accepted a task of no common difficulty. In addition to the ordinary duties of his office he was summoned to Windsor at all hours, and compelled to listen to discursive rambling speeches of inordinate length,—some of the audiences lasting five or six hours. There were also shoals of short notes of protest or objection to acts of the Government. These pin-pricks drove the Duke to exasperation, but he was nothing if not dogged, and persevered with a disagreeable task.

But this was not the worst. Wellington found that the King's word could not be trusted, that he was shiftY and evasive, and where his prejudices or dislikes were concerned, incurably obstinate. "I make it a rule never to interrupt him," Wellington told Greville, "and when in this way he tries to get rid of a subject in the way of business which he does not like, I let him talk himself out, and then quietly put before him the matter in question so that he cannot escape from it. One extraordinary peculiarity about him is that the only thing he fears is ridicule. He is afraid of nothing which is hazardous, perilous or uncertain, but he dreads ridicule."

This judgment will stand, for it accords with the known facts of George IV's life. He had many failings, but lack of courage was not amongst them. More than once he was threatened with personal violence, but he neither flinched nor quailed. He was weak and vacillating, theatrical and bombastic, but he had the grit of his Hanoverian forefathers. Threats of revolution never alarmed him, and for the London



mob that greeted him with volleys of stones and curses he had nothing but smiling contempt.

These clashes of will between King and Premier were renewed over and over again. George was ever the obstacle in the path and Wellington had an anxious and nerve-racking time. Yet his tact and dogged persistence always enabled him to get what he wanted.

These were constitutional victories, and Wellington found them easier to win than Ministers in earlier years. But they had no real significance. For from the time he became Premier in 1828, George was already broken in health and spirits. He suffered much from gouty swellings in his hands and feet. He had grown enormously stout, and was unwilling to go out or take any exercise, whilst the pains he endured were numbed by large doses of laudanum,—one hundred drops at a time. His state grew steadily worse both in mind and body. He spent his days in bed, reading newspapers and receiving callers, and seldom rose before six in the evening. His rooms were so hot that his attendants could scarcely remain in them for any length of time. He kept up his flagging spirits with cherry brandy, despite his physician's protests, and suffered from strange delusions and fancies.

He was visited by several of his relations, among others his heir, the Duke of Clarence, who bore him real affection and was solicitous for his comfort and welfare. But it was apparent to all that the end was near.

George believed that he was getting better, and would soon be about again. But his friends knew otherwise. Wellington, perceiving that he now needed other counsel, sent for Dr. Carr, the Bishop of Win-

chester, and asked him to stay at the Castle indefinitely. The King, we are told, had "two satisfactory conversations" with the good bishop. Sir W. Knighton also placed a large Bible on his table, and for this attention His Majesty expressed appreciation. On the 10th of June he received the sacrament. After this the patient rallied, and the doctors thought the disease was arrested. His appetite and digestion were better.

But this rally did not last long. On June the 25th the physicians expressed their regret that they were unable to afford him further relief, and that the end was near. To this the King replied simply, "God's will be done."

A few moments later he asked, "Where is Chichester?" The Bishop of Chichester was sent for, and from him the King received the sacrament.

On the following morning, about two o'clock, the King awoke, and feeling faint ordered the windows to be opened and asked for some *sal volatile*. He made several attempts to drink this, but failed.

Sir Walter Waller, who had been holding his hand for hours, started up in alarm. The King, pressing his hand with a convulsive grip and looking at his friend with staring eyes, whispered hoarsely, "My boy, this is death." He then fell back in his chair and closed his eyes. His attendants, horror-stricken, gazed helplessly at the dying monarch.

At this moment Sir H. Halford entered the room. The King gave him his hand, but never spoke again. A few short breathings and he was dead.

So passed the fourth of the Georges on June 26th, 1830. In searching the King's drawers and cabinets after his death, the Duke of Wellington, according to Greville, found £10,000 in his boxes, and money

scattered about everywhere. "There were about five hundred pocket-books of different dates, and in every one money,—guineas or one-pound notes. There was a prodigious quantity of hair,—women's hair,—of all colours and lengths, some locks were with the pomatum and powder still sticking to them, heaps of women's gloves, *gages d'amour* which he had got at balls."

One incident of the King's last illness deserves to be mentioned. The King received a letter from the one woman he had loved, Mrs. Fitzherbert, in which the devoted lady offered to come and nurse him. A message was afterwards conveyed to her that her offer had afforded His Majesty much satisfaction and had brought him comfort.

Some weeks later, Mrs. Fitzherbert wrote to William IV, suggesting that some of the pictures and letters she had given George IV might be restored to her.

William, who had always been her friend, sent her every memento of that old romance he could find,—gems, pictures and letters. Amongst these was a portrait in oils of Mrs. Fitzherbert herself.

But this was not all. At Brighton Mrs. Fitzherbert received a letter from the King, full of kindly sympathy in which she was asked to call upon him at the Pavilion. She replied that there were peculiar difficulties in her situation which prevented her doing so, but at the same time she expressed a wish that he would honour her with a call at her own house.

The King at once visited her. She then said that in present circumstances she could not avail herself of the honour of waiting upon His Majesty without asking his permission to place her papers before him. She then put some documents in his hand. Among

these was the certificate of her marriage to George, Prince of Wales.

The King was deeply affected by the perusal of these papers and shed tears over them. He realized for the first time how selflessly, despite desertion and neglect, she had loved her errant husband, and expressed his surprise at so much forbearance. With such documents in her hands, she could have removed the shadow that obscured her fair fame.

The King asked if he could not offer amends by making her a Duchess. She replied that she had no wish for rank, and was content with the name she had never disgraced, but was most grateful for the proposal.

"Well, then," he said, "I shall insist upon your wearing my livery. You must wear mourning for my royal brother."

Afterwards she was regularly received at the Pavilion. The papers vindicating her character were deposited at Coutts' Bank.

History smiles a little at the memory of King William IV, but in this transaction at least he acted the part of a chivalrous English gentleman.



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The *Annual Register*, especially for the years 1806-20, has proved an invaluable work of reference.

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