

Excerpt of autograph letter signed from Leigh Hunt to Percy Bysshe Shelley, 23 August 1820.

“... At present
we are all in a pretty turmoil about the Queen. Her trial has commenced,
& either the evidence against her is perjured beyond all the perjury in Italy
& Ireland to boot, or she has been playing most princely vagaries indeed ...
The whole thing indeed will be one of the greatest
pushes given to declining royalty that all the age has seen. The Queen, after all, will
have been very ill-used, let her have done what she may; for her accusers are noto-
riously as bad; & it will not be d one of the least advantages of the trial, whatever
disgust one must encounter by the way, that the people’s minds will be set thinking
[loss from tear in manuscript] questions of justice respecting the intercourse of the sexes ...
The Queen attends, on
& off; retiring when they come to speak of her baths & merry-makings. If her pleasures had been in better
taste, the liberal would only sympathize with her; but they talk, or trump up, disgusting stories of her
coarseness, -- her retiring with Bergami before a ship’s crew, looking at the indecent exhibitions of buffoons, &c.
Lucrezia Borgia was hardly worse, according to their account. – You may look upon the British
public, at present, as constantly occupied in reading trials for adultery ...”

Note: the image presented in the blog post is digitally excerpted; the original 3 ½ page double sheet letter remains intact as Pforzheimer Manuscript (LH 0032).