

on either side, by observations foreign to the point in issue. The ground then upon which I prosecute the publisher of these libels is, that I conceive they have a direct and immediate tendency to disturb the peace and tranquillity of this country, and I think it better to give a warning at the outset of my statement, that if the Defendant shall think of seizing the opportunity that the publication of the present trial presents, to give a greater circulation to his libel, this would be an offence, which I think a British Court of Justice will never tolerate. Our business on the present day is not to satisfy or to disappoint *curiosity*. We must satisfy the *Law*, and *Justice* must not be disappointed. Gentlemen of the Jury, before I describe to you what this prosecution is, I shall first tell you what it is *not*. It is *not* a prosecution against an author for discussing public events with freedom—with freedom even approaching to licentiousness. It is not a prosecution of an author speaking lightly, flippantly, or even *impertinently*, but it is a prosecution against an author, whom I conceive to have manifested in the whole scope and tenor of his publications one ruling, or rather sole object, and that object has been to vilify and degrade in the eyes of Frenchmen the character of their Chief Magistrate, and even to incite the people of that country to assassinate and murder him. Gentlemen, if you agree with me, that this is the object of the libels which are the subject of the present prosecution, I must state to you, with the fullest confidence, that I shall have the support of the Learned Judge, that such an object will not be tolerated by the British Law, and that whether we were at War, or whether we are at Peace, such publications must not be endured on British ground. If, Gentlemen, you think with me, that

any incitement or encouragement is held out to *assassination*, I am sure that there is no occasion for me to waste words upon that point—I know that British feelings recoil with more horror from the thought than it is in the power of language to express. I shall, therefore, rather point out those passages in the libels, which most evidently tend to degrade and vilify the Chief Magistrate of France in the eyes of the French People, and to stir up jealousies and animosities between the French and English Nations. I do not think myself, upon the present occasion, called upon to lay down the limit and the line which is to bound the freedom of the animadversions that may fairly and lawfully be made on the conduct of Nations, whose Government is at peace with ours; but I shall not hesitate to say, that that which would not be considered as a libel, if published against the Government of this country, I should never prosecute as a libel if published against the Government of another country; but the present case, Gentlemen of the Jury, is very far indeed removed from that nice boundary which distinguishes the legitimate freedom of discussion or political subjects, from the domain of licentiousness, calumny, and libel: this is a case of a publication whose sole object is to bring into contempt and degrade in the eyes of the French nation, both their Government and their Magistrate, and also to recommend Rebellion, Murder, and Assassination. Libels of this nature have been already severely punished in this Court; it is now fresh in the recollection of most of those who are present, that Lord George Gordon was tried upon information for a libel on the Queen of France, that he was found guilty, and, suffered a long imprisonment in consequence of that conviction: in times still later, there was an instance of a