

Review from the Morning Chronicle reprinted in  
An apology for the conduct of Mr. Charles Macklin,  
comedian (London, 1773), 3-5.

iii

AN

APOLOGY

For the CONDUCT of  
MR. CHARLES MACKLIN,  
COMEDIAN;

Which, it is hoped, will have some Effect in Favour  
of an aged Player, by whom the Public at large have  
for many Years been uncommonly gratified.

*In pity to my age, oh! hear my tale,  
Nor put me down in malice. ----*

*---- Good name, in man or woman,  
Is the immediate jewel of the soul.  
Who steals my purse, steals trash;  
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands:  
But he that filches from me my good name  
Robs me of that which not enriches him,  
But makes me poor indeed!*

SHAKESPEAR.

LONDON,

Sold by T. AXTELL, Royal Exchange; J. SWAN, opposite  
Norfolk-street, Strand; and all the Booksellers. 1773.

[Price One Shilling.]

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3

MONDAY, October 25.

THE conversation of the town, at least of those who  
profess themselves lovers of the drama, has for some days  
been much engaged by Mr. Macklin's <>anounced intention  
of performing the character of *Macbeth*, in Shakespeare's  
tragedy of that name. We look at his attempt on Satur-  
day evening as the bold endeavour of a veteran actor, to  
new model, correct and amend the mode of performance  
of a very important figure in Shakespeare's group of cha-  
racters: the attempt, even if unsuccessful, is of infinite

consequence to our national drama, and therefore laudable. Mr. Macklin's judgment in theatrical matters is universally confessed; few performers have done more service, fewer have been so theoretically profound. His design in the performance of Macbeth was visibly chaste, natural, and perfect: his execution in some parts of the play equal to his design, and superior to almost EVERY cotemporary; in others, that insufficiency of faculties which declining nature is ever accompanied with, was but too apparent. A treacherous memory, an imperfect utterance, a person neither elegant, nor full of dignity, and a want of power to vary his features, as frequently as the warring passions required, were the most obvious of these natural and easily to be accounted for deficiencies. Throughout the first act Mr. Macklin was exceedingly capital; his first scene of the second, where in his room he argues conscientiously on the ingratitude of the murder of Duncan, was also singularly excellent. In the dagger scene, and those afterwards in which the whirlwind of conflicting passions agitate his frame, and create a wildness of delivery, his judgment was

4

lost sight of in the vehemence of energetic expression; and, from a want of an occasionally varied tone, passion and observation were sometimes exhibited by stage-rant, and a sententious doling out of the dialogue, which fatigued the ear, and torpified the senses. In a few of the scenes Mr. Macklin's failure from his evident design produced rather a ridiculous effect. In the last act he now and then recovered from that tremulousness of action, and that monotony of rage, which he had been hurried into in the two preceding ones, and the audience confessed his merit by loud plaudits. Upon the whole, he seemed to have studied the character with peculiar and profound attention; and, had his age and abilities coincided with his judgment, we verily believe he would have performed it with a degree of skill unequalled in the theatrical annals. Taking him upon the ground on which he now stands, it will be generally confessed, that, in the autumn of his life, he gave an instance of a possession of stage requisites few actors can boast in their spring; and that, considering the many and obvious disadvantages he laboured under, his performance deserved our applause, nay, it merited our admiration; that he drew a fine out-line none will surely deny, or that younger actors may reap great advantages from minutely observing the excellencies of his *Macbeth*. His varying his emphasis, in many speeches of the character, from the hitherto received mode of delivering Mac-

beth, is a matter too likely to carry us into prolixity for us now to discuss; we thought him in many places, particularly in the line

"Making the *green*, one red" ----

critically just; we shall, however, leave the settling the propriety or impropriety of his emphasis, as we imagine it will turn out -- a fertile subject for news-paper altercation, coffee-room discourse, and beer-house squabble.

The alteration in the *jeux de théâtre* respecting the representation of this tragedy do Mr. Macklin great credit. His change of the scenery is peculiarly characteristic. The quadrangle of Macbeth's castle, and the door which is supposed to lead to Duncan's apartment, (both of which are intirely new) are additions of consequence to the exhibition of the play. The door also through which Macbeth comes to the weird sisters, in the 4th act, is a better

5

and more probable entrance than through the common stage portal. The dresses are new, elegant, and of a sort hitherto unknown to a London audience, but exceedingly proper. The Banquet was superbly set out, and it must be confessed that the managers seem to have spared neither cost nor assiduity to ornament and add to the effect of the representation.

[Morning Chronicle.]