

David Erskine Baker, *The companion to the play-house* (London, 1764), vol. 1, sigs. N1v--2r.

sig N1vb

MACBETH. Trag. by W. Shakespeare, 4to. 1604.
-- This Play is extremely irregular, every One of the Rules of the *Drama* being entirely and repeatedly broken in upon. -- Yet, notwithstanding, it contains an Infinity of Beauties, both with Respect to Language, Character, Passion and Incident. -- The Incantations of the Witches are equal, if not superior, to the *Canidia* of Horace. -- The Use this Author has made of Banquo's Ghost towards the heightning the already heated Imagination of Macbeth, is inimitably fine. -- Lady Macbeth discovering her own Crimes in her Sleep, is perfectly original and admirably conducted. -- Macbeth's Soliloquies both before and after the Murder, are Master-Pieces of unmatchable Writing; while his Readiness of being deluded at first by the Witches, and his Desperation on the Discovery of the fatal Ambiguity and Loss of all Hope from supernatural Predictions, produce a Catastrophe truly just, and form'd with the utmost Judgment. ---- In a Word, notwithstanding all its Irregularities, it is certain one of the best Pieces of the very best Master in this Kind of Writing that the World ever produced. ---- The Plot is founded on the Scottish History, and may be traced in the Writings of Hector Boethius, Buchanan, Hollingshead, &c. in Hey-

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wood's *Hierarchy of Angels*,[<*>](#) and in the first Book of Heylin's *Cosmography*. The entire Story at large, however, collected from them all, is to be seen in a Work in three Vol. 12mo. entitled *Shakespeare illustrated*,[<†>](#) vol. I. -- The Scene in the End of the fourth Act lies in England. ---- Through all the rest of the Play is Scotland, and chiefly at Macbeth's Castle at Inverness.

Sir W. Davenant altered this Play, and added several new Songs. -- It was performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane during his Management, and printed in 4to. 1674. -- This Alteration is by no Means equal to the Original, yet on Account of the Music, which is entirely fine, being composed by Mr. Locke, it is still very frequently performed at our Theatres instead of the Original!

One Mr. Lee, an Actor belonging to the Edinburgh Theat. also took on himself to publish an altered Edition of this Play in that City, in 8vo. 1753. -- But to that Edition the greatest Honour I could show, would be to let it drop in Oblivion, and sink in the Obscurity it rose from.

[<* Thomas Heywood, The hierarchie of the blessed angells \(London, 1635\), 508--9.>](#)

[<† Charlotte Lennox, Shakespear illustrated, vol. 1 \(London, 1753\), 251--92.>](#)