



SIR, — It is my custom never to answer *anonymous* letters, but in the present instance I cannot do otherwise than meet your communication in the same kind and friendly spirit in which it is sent. You may well allude to the “envenomed teeth” of those “factious vipers” of the Press. They have struggled hard to crush my energy, and disappoint my hopes, and I believe I can proudly boast of being the *only actor* on record who has run a successful career without their aid. *All* others have had some portion in their favour. *I* have scarcely had a solitary instance. *And why?*

Because I will not know them.

The *gentlemen!!* of the Press as they call themselves are with *very few* exceptions low and vulgar men who write from prejudice or personal feeling.

One of the only tragedians of the present day was as much their victim ten years since, as I am now—but feasts and banquets have changed their tone and they hail with rapture in his public life, the man who feeds them in his Private Home. There is not one of those who shoot their spite at *me*, that are not the *dinner* companions of another. Mr. Knowles from my first start on the road of public life was filled with “envy, hatred,

and malice,” and the position I gained in defiance of his prophecy, a Position which enabled me to act with generosity towards him, has only increased his spleen towards one whose right he questions to ride “in his own carriage while *he* walks.” Conscientiously can I declare that my life has been devoted to the service of my Profession, and to the assistance of its members, but ingratitude and unkindness have been my only reward. I have dwelt too long on this subject but I feel it keenly. Respecting the observations made by Mr. Knowles in his lecture, I have only followed “the same *unwarrantable absence of mind*” that was exhibited by *Kemble*—my father—and *Macready* and is one of the hereditary points of the play, for *each Macbeth* has *obliged Lenore* to repeat the *question of the King’s deposition*. I see no necessity for it, nor no very great objection. Respecting again the clashing of the daggers—that has been mere *accident*, without any object whatever in it. *I* never dreamt of calling Lady Macbeth’s attention by any such absurd means, but if in the natural expression of the moment I clasp my hands, and the daggers *should* clash in consequence, I cannot understand why the critick should presume any such intention! and none but an *enemy*



would. I cannot for one moment agree with your friendly suggestion of "Liar and Slave." In this position nothing can be overdrawn in "the fearful look." Reflect for one moment on the inward feelings of the King when he hears that what he considered an impossibility, (and on which he rests his whole life and soul), has suddenly happened and in one second, I may say, he finds himself cast to Perdition. Oh, no no, no, nothing can be *too* fearful at such a time.

I am much pressed for time or I would write more in detail. Let me assure you however that I am *really* grateful for your kind expressions, and for the interest you take in

CHARLES KEAN.

We leave London for Scotland immediately.

16 March 1844. 119 Park St.

P.S.—I agree with you that "face and manner" may not be sufficiently expressive of scorn for the servants "lily-liver"—and will correct it.

In haste.

