

THE CZAR: AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY

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The Czar: An Historical Tragedy by Joseph Cradock

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JOSEPH CRADOCK

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HISTORICAL
TRAGEDY**

THE CZAR,

AN

HISTORICAL TRAGEDY.

.....Veris filius remissos.

Hon.

By JOSEPH CRADOCK, Esq. M.A. F.S.A.

London :

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1824.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS Tragedy forms the commencement of a Publication that may extend to four octavo volumes. All Original Papers and Letters are consigned to Executors, as the Author is at a very advanced age, and it is his chief wish that nothing unauthenticated may be given to the Public after his decease.

July, 1824.

PREFACE.

THE Tragedy of *The Czar* was brought to the morning of rehearsal, when the two Queens were to have been personated by Mrs. Yates and Mrs. Crawford, but a disappointment was then chiefly occasioned by the latter lady, who soon after retired from the theatre. Ottokesa was certainly intended for Mrs. Yates, but she claimed to play the youthful Catharine, that she might speak the Author's Epilogue in that character. If this celebrated actress* would have taken the part of the repudiated Queen, Mrs. Hartley, in point of beauty, might have supplied every requisite as the rival bride.

The Tragedy, by engagement, should have made its appearance under the sanction of Mr. Garrick, but it was the Author's fault that it was not presented till the very night that Mr. Garrick was in treaty for the sale of Drury Lane. From that time it has never been offered to any theatre.

* Mrs. Yates had before introduced the Tragedy of *Zobeide* by the same Author at Covent Garden Theatre.

To the Lord Chamberlain the Author's acknowledgments were due, who suggested a judicious alteration in the Ambassador's scene*. To His Excellency the Russian Ambassador at the English Court likewise, who not only offered to attend the rehearsals, but to furnish the theatre with any hints or specimens of Russian costume; indeed many other circumstances at that time seemed to combine to render its appearance particularly favourable. The Author has no complaints whatever to make, as he was treated with the greatest civility by the Managers of both theatres,—a coalition having taken place between Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Harris; and he had his option (as it might best suit) to bring his Tragedy out at either.

To the Letters of Mr. Garrick and Mr. Sheridan, as now printed, he can best appeal, in proof of their kindness to him, and flattering approbation of his dramatic performance. Mr. Garrick, though very ill, devoted a morning to hearing and criticising the Tragedy of *The Czar*, at his house in the Adelphi. This was the last time the Author ever saw his most excellent and truly valued friend.

* See Extract from Walpole, p. 73.

*Letter from D. Garrick, Esq.**Adelphi, Jan. 1, 1776.*

A happy new year to you, my dear Sir, and many of them.—So said our less refined ancestors, and I hope their sayings will not be disagreeable to Mr. Cradock, though they offend the delicate ears of our very modish fine gentlemen. Whenever you please to open your budget I shall attend to it with pleasure. I shall have a double pleasure in the operation, first, to hear you read a Tragedy, and next, that Tragedy is your's.

I am, dear Sir, most sincerely your's,

To J. Cradock, Esq. at Hinchinbrook, D. GARRICK.
near Huntingdon.

From the same.

DEAR SIR,—You must have heard before this of a violent bilious attack which almost renders me incapable of reading, writing, or judging. I am like a state-prisoner, debarred the use of pen, ink, and paper. I am going into Hampshire for change of air, and thence, if I recover but slowly, to Bath; so that my stay there or absence from town will prevent for some time my even seeing a theatre. Indeed, Sir, I am grown unfit for any thing but sitting in a great chair, or walking, or rather, at present, creeping about my garden; the least business agitates me, and my friends of the faculty have ordered me abstinence from all theatrical matters. I have not seen Sheridan but once since the death of poor Linley; he called yesterday, and I was out to take the air; I had promised to write him a little trifle for his opening, but I found myself so unfit for scribbling, that, for the first time, I gave up the business, and was brought in (like the tars who are admitted into Greenwich Hospital) *disabled*. As I can only pray for you, be assured that you shall have my prayers for your success. Should I be in town and able to attend the theatre I will certainly be there.—I am, most truly,

Your obliged humble servant,

Adelphi, Sept. 14, 1778.

D. GARRICK.