

PROLOGUE

TO ADDISON'S TRAGEDY OF 'CATO.'

1713.

To wake the Soul, by tender strokes of Art!
To raise the genius, and to mend the heart!
To make Mankind, in conscious virtue bold,
Live o'er each scene, and Be what they behold!
For this, the Tragic Muse first trod the Stage,
Commanding tears to stream through every Age.
Tyrants no more their savage nature kept;
And foes to Virtue wondered how they wept!

Our Author shuns, by vulgar springs, to move
The Hero's glory, or the Virgin's love!
In pitying Love, we but our weakness show;
And wild Ambition well deserves its woe!

Here, tears shall flow from a more gen'rous cause;
Such tears as Patriots shed for dying Laws!
He bids your breasts with ancient ardour rise;
And calls forth Roman drops from British eyes!
Virtue confessed in human shape he draws;
What PLATO thought, and Godlike CATO was!
No common object to your sight displays;
But what, with pleasure Heaven itself surveys: