

tho' he has, thro' the Course of the Piece, appear'd to have Foibles, yet, as they have not arisen from any Madness of Heart, and that the open Sincerity of his Repentance is too apparent to every Auditor, not to render him deserving of a Restoration to his Esteem, the Author might perhaps have wav'd some little of his Punishment, and restor'd his *Araminta* also to his Arms.—

What the Author however seems to have principally aimed at, *viz.* Delicacy, Sentiment, and the Consequence of Instruction in the Conduct of a generous and well-plac'd Passion, he has undoubtedly most eminently succeeded in.—His *Celia* and Sir *John Divilant*, and more especially the latter, are Characters most perfectly amiable and worthy of Imitation, and to remove at once the great Cavils of the Critics, who seem'd with Respect to this Piece to be at a Loss where to fix a Censure, if a dramatic Piece has those essential good Qualities of affording at once a Sensibility to the Heart, a Lesson to the Understanding, and an agreeable Amusement to the Senses, of what Importance as it be look back to what Title the Author has thought proper to give it.

SEMI-Opera, by *William Congreve*, 4to.—This Piece was not performed at the Time when it was written, nor indeed during the Life of it's Author; but has been since set to Music by the great Mr. *Handel*, and frequently represented at the Theatre Royal in *Covent Garden* with universal Applause.

SESTERTIUS, or *Royalty in Disguise*. Trag. by *John Sturmy*, 8vo. 1728.—This Play was acted with some Success at the Theatre Royal in *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*, and

tho' it is not in itself a Piece of any great Merit in Respect to Language or poetical Execution, yet it seems to have furnished Hints to some of our later Tragic Writers, who, having had greater Abilities, have made a more masterly Use of the very same Incidents that compose the Plot of this Tragedy.—In short, *Merope* and *Barbarossa* seem both greatly indebted to this Piece.—The Scene is laid in *Egypt*, where *Omar* having deposed and murder'd the former King *Pharnaces*, and usurped the Throne from his Widow *Nitocris*, is still unsatisfied till he can close the Scene of Blood by the Death of her Son *Sesostrius*, who, thro' the Care of *Pbares*, an old Servant of the King's, had been preserved from the General Slaughter of the Royal Race, and bred up at a Distance from the Court.—*Sesostrius* returning to *Egypt*, in order to assert his Rights, meets with *Omar's* Son, who, having attacked him, falls a Victim to his Valour, and the Conqueror making himself Master of a Ring, Letter and other Credentials belonging to the Son of *Omar*, proceeds on his Expedition, and by the Advice of *Pbares* passes on *Omar* for his own Son (whom he had not seen from Infancy) and the Slayer of *Sesostrius*.—This Imposition however being at length discovered, the Tyrant's Rage dooms him an immediate Sacrifice at the Temple of *Isis*; but as the fatal Act is just on the Verge of being executed, *Sesostrius*, full of a supernatural Ardor, seizes on the Knife of Sacrifice, and plunging it in the Tyrant's Heart, at once frees the Nation from Opposition, and restores himself to the Throne, his Right by Birth.