

DL Queen at their coming to the House, and Written on Purpose by Mr Dryden. Epilogue, [Written] by Mr Dryden. Prologue, Intended to be spoken, Written by the Author.

COMMENT. The King's Company. The date of the first performance is not known. Wilson ("Six Restoration Play-Dates," pp. 222-23) argues from a number of references (principally in the Epilogue) to events of early 1681 which point to a premiere near May 1681: to the dissolution of Parliament, 28 March 1681; to the comet which appeared in November 1680 and disappeared in January 1680/1; to the "Hatfield Maid"; to William Lilly, the astrologer, who is referred to as though alive, thus suggesting a premiere before his death, 9 June 1681.

It is possible that the premiere may have been earlier than this. In 1681 was published *Poeta de Tristibus; or, The Poet's Complaint*, whose author had obviously read the Prologue and Epilogue to *The Unhappy Favourite*. He represents himself as a disappointed dramatist whose tragedy has been rejected by both houses because "their Summer-store/Will all this Winter last." With the work entered in the *Term Catalogues* in 1682 and a copy purchased by Narcissus Luttrell with his note "4d 1681 12 Nov" (see *A Bibliography of John Dryden*, ed. Macdonald, pp. 235-36), his quotations from the Epilogue to *The Unhappy Favourite* and references to the Prologue would offer no difficulties if it were not that the "Author's Epistle" in which the references are made is dated "at Dover the Tenth day of January 1680/1," thus suggesting that he had seen the Prologue and Epilogue before that date. Nevertheless, some of the references in the Epilogue (to *Heracitus Ridens*, beginning on 1 Feb. 1680/1, and *Democritus Ridens*, beginning on 14 March 1680/1) preclude a January premiere for the Prologue and Epilogue. Possibly the dating of the "Author's Epistle" is in error.

Wednesday 11 DL COMMENT. This day is one of several on which, according to William Morley, treasurer of the King's Company, the receipts fell below £10, to £3 14s. 6d. See Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, p. 267.

Monday 30 DL COMMENT. On this day the receipts at the King's House fell to £3 2s. See Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, p. 267.

June 1681

Wednesday 1 DL COMMENT. In an inquiry concerning how many days the King's Company had been unable to act in the spring, William Cartwright on this day stated that he had been ill and absent and had not been among the players more than four or five times since 1 Feb. 1680/1. See Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, p. 267.

Saturday 18 DL COMMENT. The receipts of the King's Company on this day were only £3 13s. See Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, p. 267.

August 1681

BF COMMENT. Richard Shore paid £5 for space at Bartholomew Fair. See Rosenfeld, *Theatre of the London Fairs*, p. 6.