

Tuesday 28
DL

COMMENT. Rich's Company. Lady Morley attended this performance: Lady Morley and two in the Box at Constant Couple. See Hotson, *Commonwealth and Restoration Stage*, p. 378.

There is no certainty that this is the first performance, but the fact that the play was advertised in the *Post Man*, 7–9 Dec. 1699, suggests that the first production may have occurred in mid-November. The Prologue also refers to the abandonment of Dorset Garden to "That strong Dog Sampson" (see 15 and 25 Nov. 1699).

A song, "Thus Damon knock'd at Celia's door," set by Daniel Purcell, was published separately about this time. Preface, Edition of 1700: All will join with me in Commendation of the Actors, and allow, without detracting from the Merit of others, that the Theatre Royal affords an excellent and compleat Set of Comedians. Mr Wilks's Performance has set him so far above Competition in the Part of Wildair, that none can pretend to envy the Praise due to his Merit.

Preface to *The Inconstant* (1702): I remember, that about two Years ago, I had a Gentleman from France [*The Constant Couple*] that brought the Play-house some fifty Audiencies in five months.

A Comparison between the Two Stages (1702), p. 32: *Critick*: But above all, commend me to the ingenious Author of the *Trip to the Jubilee*. *Ramble*: Oh Lord, Sir! you won't quarrel with that Play; never any thing did such wonders. *Critick*: Oh 'twas admirable! admirable! I wonder the Town did not just then bespeak the Bays for him. *Sullen*: Nay, for ought you and I know, he may live to enjoy 'em; I assure you all the run of the Town is on his side. The Owl was never more esteem'd at Athens than the *Trip to the Jubilee* was here. *Critick*: Indeed I have known a Footman have a great stroak with his Lord at begging a Favour; if all the Footmen in Town that admire him were to club for his Preferment, I don't know what might be done. *Ramble*: The Footmen? Ay, and the middle Gallery too, I assure you are of his side, and that's a strong Party. *Critick*: Why, I believe it, 'tis about the pitch of their Understanding; but if ever it diverted one Man of tolerable Sense I'll be hang'd. *Sullen*: I don't know who are your People of tolerable Sense, Mr Critick, but at that play I have seen the Pit, Box and Stage so crowded—and if that is not a sign.

Wednesday 29
DG ENTERTAINMENTS.

COMMENT. *London Post*, 24–27 Nov. 1699: [William Joy] being oblig'd to leave Town in order to pursue some other Method, can shew but twice, which will be God-willing on Wednesday and Friday next at the Theatre in Dorset Garden, beginning precisely at 11 a Clock, being resolved to shew no more before he leaves the Town.

December 1699

LIF

IPHIGENIA. [By John Dennis.] Edition of 1700: Prologue, Spoken by Mr Verbruggen as the Genius of England. Epilogue by Coll. Codrington. Orestes – Betterton; Pilades – Williams; Queen – Mrs Barry; Iphigenia – Mrs Bracegirdle; Euphrosine – Mrs Martin.

COMMENT. Betterton's Company. The date of the première is not known, but Dryden, on 14 Dec. 1699, indicated that the run of the play had been completed by that day. A copy in the Folger Shakespeare Library has a MS date of 23 Dec. 1699, and the *Post Man*, 21–23 Dec. 1699, has a notice of its publication.

Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 45: *Ipbigenia* a Tragedy, wrote by Mr Dennis, a good Tragedy and well Acted; but answer'd not the Expences they were at in Cloathing it. [In *The Life of Mr John Dennis* (London, 1734) the author states that