The Works Of Mr. George Lillo; With Some Account Of His Life

Containing, The Fatal Curiosity. A Tragedy. Marina. A Tragedy. Elmerick. A Tragedy. Britannia And Batavia. A Masque. And Arden Of Feversham. A Tragedy

Lillo, George

London, 1775

Epilogue.

urn:nbn:de:gbv:45:1-2387

EPILOGUE.

WHEN to a future race the present days
Shall be the theme of censure or of praise,
When they shall blame what's wrong, what's right allow,
Just as you treat your own fore-fathers now,
I'm thinking what a figure you will make,
No light concern, sirs, where your fame's at stake.
I hope we need not urge your country's cause,
You'll guard her glory, and assert her laws,
Nor force your ruin'd race, mad with their pains,
To curse you as the authors of their chains.
We dare not think, we wou'd not fear, you will;
For Britons, *though provok'd, are* Britons *still.*
Yet let not this kind caution give offence:
The surest friend to liberty is sense.
How that declines the drooping arts declare;
Are your diversions what your fathers were?
At masquerades, your wisdom to display,
You make the stupid farce for which you pay.
Musick itself may be too dearly bought,
Nor was it sure design'd to banish thought.
But, sirs, whate'er's your fate in future story,
Well have the British *fair secur'd their glory.*
When worse than barbarism had sunk your taste,
When nothing pleas'd but what laid virtue waste,
A sacred band, determin'd, wise, and good,
They jointly rose to stop th'exotick flood,
And strove to wake, by Shakespeare's *nervous lays,*
The manly genius of Eliza's *days.*

Be it an omen of returning sense,
Others adopt our softness and expence:
Well pleas'd such harmless insults we may bear,
Those follies lost we've numbers yet to spare;
Unquestion'd let 'em rob us of our shame ———
We need but ask our treasure and our fame.