
P R E F A C E.

I *Perfwade my self, that before so useful a Curiosity as the following Treatise, it would not be disagreeable to the Reader, to give him an Account of the Origin and Progress of the Art of Orchestography. Furetier, in his Historical Dictionary, tells us of a curious Treatise of this Art by one Thoinet Arbeau, printed 1588, at Langres, from whom Monsieur Feuillet, in his Preface, supposes this Art to date its first Rise and Birth, tho' he could never procure a Sight of it, as not to be found in Paris. But this very Book falling into my Hands, I took Care to peruse it with some Attention, but found it far short of that Expectation, which such Recommendation had rais'd in me: For tho' it might perhaps have given the Hint to Mr. Beauchamp; yet it is nothing but an imperfect rough Draught, nor is it confin'd to Dancing, since it treats besides of beating the Drum, playing on the Pipe, and the like.*

But notwithstanding this blind Hint of Arbeau, to do Justice to Mons. Beauchamp, we must attribute to him the Invention of this Art, who in all Probability, could no more see the former Book, than Mons. Feuillet. But as no Art was ever invented and perfected at once; so it remain'd for Mons. Feuillet, to raise the compleat and finish'd Superstructure on Mons. Beauchamp's Foundation; and it must be allowed, that Mons. Feuillet has carry'd this Art to a very great Perfection, and taken a great deal of Pains in the Improvement of the Character, and given Rules so just, and a Method so proper, that I cannot imagine any Man can flatter himself with an Ability of designing a better, or more regular manner. For this Reason I chose rather to follow his Method entirely, than attempt any Alteration of my own, which I have done with that Care and Diligence, that I think I may assure the Reader I have omitted nothing that he has deliver'd. I have also made it my Business