

FROM GRAY, Saturday 3 January 1736

Printed from MS in Waller Collection.
Dated by the references to *Artaserse* and *Zara*.

Jan. 3 [1736], London.¹

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A THOUSAND thanks for the thousand happy New Years you sent me,³ and which, I suppose, a thousand good-natured people have made you a present of, in the overflowings of their zeal:

—May each revolving year
With blessings crowned, like this, returning smile
On <Celadon>,⁴ the happiest of his kind—

I need not wish anything further, since (as I wish what you do) to be sure you know my wishes already. Wise folks say, the wise man's happiness is in himself; pray, are you the wise man? They tell you too that mortal happiness is not of long continuance; heaven send, yours may last till you wish for a little misery; nay! and longer still. I can't tell whether our situations are much changed since this time twelvemonth; certain I am however, that there is a great alteration: I don't succeed to your diversions in town, I believe, and yet am absent from Cambridge⁵ without regret, nay with pleasure, though not infinitely happier here. I have very little to tell you as to the place called London: *Adriano*⁶ expired a few days ago, and his ancient predecessor *Artaxerxes*⁷ succeeds

1. No doubt Gray spent Christmas with his parents at their house at the corner of Cornhill and St Michael's Alley. Gray was born there, and his mother and her elder sister, Mary Antrobus (1683–1749), conducted a millinery business there from ca 1705 till Gray's father died, in 1741, when Gray's mother and aunt removed to Stoke Poges. The house was destroyed in the great fire at Cornhill 25 March 1748. See *Gray's Corr.* i. 51, 304–5, 324, iii. 1196–7; Mason, *Mem. Gray* 120; Bernard Drew, *The London Assurance*, n.d., pp. 125–6; *London Magazine* 1748, xvii. 139–40.

2. Probably 'Dear Celadon'; the words on the other side of the MS were restored by HW.

3. HW to Gray ca 31 Dec. 1735, missing.

4. Piece cut out, except for the bottom strokes of the letters.

5. Gray was not charged for commons at Peterhouse from 26 Dec. 1735 to 23 Jan. 1736.

6. *Adriano in Siria*, opera in three acts, words by Pietro Metastasio (1698–1782) and music by Francesco Maria Veracini (1685–1750). First acted in London 25 Nov. 1735 at the Haymarket, it was taken off the bill after the tenth night (30 Dec.), and revived 7 Feb. 1736 (Nicoll, *Drama 1700–50*, p. 388; Hugo Riemann, *Musiklexikon*, Berlin, 1929; Burney, *Hist. of Music* iv. 391).

7. Hasse's *Artaserse* was arranged as a pasticcio to include songs and airs by Riccardo Broschi (1700–56) and others. It opened 29 Oct. 1734 at the Haymarket, and