

make you cry, it will make you laugh; and, so it moves some passion, that I take to be enough. Adieu, dear Sir! I am

Sincerely yours,

T. GRAY

TO GRAY, ca January 1747

Missing. Implied *post* Jan. 1747.

FROM GRAY, January 1747

Reprinted from *Works* v. 384–6.

[Cambridge,] January 1747.

IT is doubtless an encouragement to continue writing to you, when you tell me you answer me with pleasure.¹ I have another reason which would make me very copious, had I anything to say; it is, that I write to you with equal pleasure, though not with equal spirits, nor with like plenty of materials; please to subtract then so much for spirit, and so much for matter, and you will find me, I hope, neither so slow nor so short as I might otherwise seem. Besides, I had a mind to send you the remainder of *Agrippina*, that was lost in a wilderness of papers. Certainly you do her too much honour; she seemed to me to talk like an *Oldboy*,² all in figures and mere poetry, instead of nature and the language of real passion. Do you remember '*Approchez-vous, Néron*'?³—Who would not rather have thought of that half line than all Mr Rowe's⁴ flowers of eloquence? However, you will find the remainder^{5a} here at the end in an outrageous long speech; it was begun above four years ago (it is a misfortune you know my age,⁵ else I might have added)

Mr Mason's edition of his works [Mason, *Mem. Gray* 128–35] (Berry). Gray sent one of the speeches to West ca 1 April 1742 (*Gray's Corr.* i. 189).

1. HW to Gray Jan. 1747, missing.

2. Possibly a character in an early comedy; but see the end of *ante* 29 Dec. 1737.

3. Agrippina to her son: '*Approchez-vous, Néron, et prenez votre place,*' in Racine's *Britannicus* (1669) IV. ii, which Gray and HW saw at the Comédie-Fran-

çaise in Paris 21 May 1739 (*Gray's Corr.* i. 108). '*The Britannicus* of M. Racine, I know was one of Mr Gray's most favourite plays; and the admirable manner in which I have heard him say that he saw it represented at Paris seems to have led him to choose the death of Agrippina for this his first and only effort in the drama' (Mason, *Mem. Gray* 124).

4. Nicholas Rowe (1674–1718).

4a. Missing.

5. Gray was 30 on 26 Dec. 1746 (*Gray's Corr.* i. 261).