

*Tuesday 12* COMMENT. Dryden to Walsh, 12 Dec. 1693: Your Critique, by your description of its bulk, will be to large for a preface to my Play, which is now studying; but cannot be acted till after Christmase is over. I call it Love Triumphant; or Nature will prevaile: . . . I have rememberd you to all your friends; and in particular to Congreve; who sends you his play, as a present from him selfe, by this conveyance; & much desires the honour of being better known to you. His Double Dealer is much censured by the greater part of the Town: and is defended onely by the best Judges, who, you know, are commonly the fewest. Yet it gets ground daily, and has already been acted Eight times. The women thinke he has exposd their Bitchery too much; & the Gentlemen, are offended with him; for the discovery of their follies: & the way of their Intrigues, under the notion of friendship to their Ladyes Husbands. My verses, which you will find before it, were written before the play was acted, but I neither alterd them nor do I alter my opinion of the play (*The Letters of John Dryden*, pp. 62-63).

## January 1694

*Monday 1* CONCERT. Hymn to the Sun. Set by Dr Purcel, and Sung before their Majesties  
At Court on New-Years-Day, 1694.

COMMENT. For the poem, see Matthew Prior, *The Literary Works*, ed. H. B. Wright and M. K. Spears (Oxford, 1959), I, 125-28; II, 856-57.

*Wednesday 10* THE PROPHECESS; or, The History of Dioclesian. [By Thomas Betterton.] See  
DG May 1693.

COMMENT. The United Company. This performance is indicated in the Newdigate newsletters, 11 Jan. 1693/4: On Tuesday the Prince of Baden dynd with y<sup>e</sup> D of Linster and yesterday his Highness saw the new Opera called Diaclessia acted at the K<sup>s</sup> play house (Wilson, "More Theatre Notes from the Newdigate Newsletters," p. 59). There is, however, some uncertainty about this performance. In the first place, *Dioclesian* was not a new play, although new songs frequently appeared in it. In the second place, Dryden's new play, *Love Triumphant*, was ready for its première about this time, and the compiler of the Newdigate newsletters might have been mistaken in identifying the play. Yet the certain performance of *The Double Dealer* on 13 Jan. 1693/4 would be an awkward interruption of the initial run of *Love Triumphant* if it were the new play the Newdigate newsletters refer to. It seems likely, then, that *Love Triumphant* did not make its first appearance until mid-January.

In *Thesaurus Musicus*, 1694, is a new song in *The Propbetess*, Act III, "When first I saw the bright Aurelia's eyes," set by Henry Purcell and sung by Mrs Ayliff. It is also in *Joyful Cuckoldom*, 1695. In the latter compilation are three other songs for this play: "Since from my dear," sung by Mrs Hudson "in the Prophetess, as it is newly reviv'd," set by Henry Purcell; "Let monarchs fight," the words by Thomas Betterton, the music by Henry Purcell, and sung by Freeman; "Let y<sup>e</sup> soldiers," the words by Thomas Betterton, set by Henry Purcell, and sung by Freeman.

*Tbursday 11* COMMENT. Evelyn, *Diary*, 11 Jan. 1693/4: Sup'd at Mr Ed Sheldons where was Mr Dryden the Poet, who now intending to Write no more Plays (intent upon the Translation of Virgil) read to us his Prologue & Epilogue to his last Valedictory Play, now shortly to be Acted.