

6 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 30 August 1770

MS: Dr. Williams's Library MS 12.12, f. 20

PRINTED: Rutt, I, i, pp. 118-119

[(Aug 30 1770)]

Dear Sir

I think myself much obliged to you for the favourable mention, I doubt not, you made of me to the Duke.¹ I shall certainly wait him when I go to London, which I fancy will be the next winter; but I am by no means ~~so~~ sanguine in my expectations from him, or indeed from any other quarter. I have expended about 100£, but £ if I live to finish the work I am about, I hope it will be reimbursed to me.

I shall be a loser by the Repository this year; but I am encouraged to expect that some friends of the design will advance something ~~so~~ towards defraying the expenses attending it, till the sale shall repay me. If ever it do I shall return whatever shall be advanced. At the years end I shall state the account to a few friends but I am advised not to make it public lest our enemies should triumph. I have not the least doubt of its being carried on with spirit, and that I shall be supplied with very valuable materials for a considerable time to come. I have by me the quantity of half a volume. Mr Cappe² has perused the MS on the Intermediate state³ and joins the Archdeacon, in requesting that it may be all printed, except a few pages, which he says are not much to the purpose.

By this time you will have seen my Letters to Mr Enfield.⁴ I do not know how they are received by him; but as I have not heard from him, I am afraid he doth not take it so well as I hoped he would have done.⁵ My piece will give more offence to a very considerable part of those who are called Rational Dissenters⁶ than you can imagine. By one means or another, I believe I have more enemies among the Dissenters than in the church. I shall soon be obliged to count the Papists, and Quakers, in order to have any friends at all,⁷ except a few philosophical people, who, with his Grace, know nothing of my having meddled with Theology or Politics. I think to reprint the Address to Protestant

¹ Hugh Percy first duke of Northumberland (bap. 1712, d. 1786), see 30 May 1770.

² Newcome Cappe (1733-1800), see 30 May 1770.

³ Caleb Fleming (1699-1779), 'An Attempt to prove that the Resurrection takes place immediately after Death', *Theol. Repos.*, II (1770), 346-395.

⁴ William Enfield (1741-1797), see 30 Jul 1770. The text is *Letters to the Author of Remarks on Several Late Publications relative to the Dissenters, in a Letter to Dr. Priestley* (London, 1770).

⁵ See 4 Nov 1770.

⁶ Priestley first began to use the term 'rational Dissenters' in 1769, in *Considerations on Differences of Opinion among Christians* (1769) and *A View of the Principles and Conduct of the Protestant Dissenters, with respect to the Civil and Ecclesiastical Constitution of England* (1769). In the former work, Priestley writes in his letter to Venn that 'rational Dissenters' is 'a term which I am, surely, as much at liberty to use, by way of distinction, as you are to assume the title of *orthodox* for the same purpose' (77). The earliest eighteenth century use of the term on ECCO is in Soame Jenyns's *A Free Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil* (London, 1761), where Jenyns defines 'rational dissenters', in opposition to the Methodists, as 'having arbitrarily expunged out of their Bibles every thing, which appears to them contradictory to reason, or in other words every thing which they cannot understand' (xvi).

⁷ For Priestley's views on the tolerance of Quakers see *An Essay on the First Principles of Government* (London, 1768), 186.

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Dissenters as such,⁸ with additions; and this with the piece on Discipline,⁹ will conclude all that I think of doing in that way.

I shall soon read Beattie.¹⁰ D^r Leechman¹¹ gave me a good account of it some time ago.

It would [[give]] Mr Turner¹² & me great pleasure to see you with us, but indeed we cannot make another journey northwards, this summer. With compliments to M^{rs} Lindsey I am Dear Sir,

yours affectionately

J Priestley

⁸ Priestley, *A Free Address to Protestant Dissenters, as such. By a Dissenter* (London, 1769). A second edition was published by Joseph Johnson in 1771.

⁹ Priestley, *A Free Address to Protestant Dissenters, on the Subject of Church Discipline; with a Preliminary Discourse, concerning the Spirit of Christianity, and the Corruption of it by False Notions of Religion* (London, 1770).

¹⁰ James Beattie (1735-1803), Scottish poet and philosopher. Beattie's *Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, in Opposition to Sophistry and Scepticism* (1770) was a bitterly polemical attack on 'sceptical philosophy', in particular on David Hume, whose writings Beattie believed were undermining religion and morals. It presented a popularised version of the philosophy of Thomas Reid, to show that philosophical scepticism was contrary to 'common sense' [Roger J. Robinson, 'Beattie, James (1735–1803)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, Sept 2004, online edn.].

¹¹ William Leechman (1706-1785), Church of Scotland minister and principal of Glasgow University in the 1770s [ODNB].

¹² William Turner (1714-1794), see Mar 1770.