

10 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 23 December 1770

MS: Dr. William's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 27-28

PRINTED: Rutt, I, i, pp. 127-128; Schofield, no. 31

ADDRESS: The Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr Lindsey at Catterick Yorkshire

[Dec 23. 1770]

Dear Sir

I thank you most sincerely for your remarks on the Free Address,<sup>1</sup> which I have sent to the printer, corrected in every place as you would have it, and improved in other respects, in such a manner as, I flatter myself, you will not dislike. The conclusion of the section I troubled you with<sup>2</sup> is now more serious than the beginning, and has no reference to the publication you now have in your hands. The close of it was dictated by the warmth of my affection for you, and your friends. I will say nothing more till you see it, but it will not be very soon, as our printers will not do much work in the holidays.

I shall take your advice with respect to my Lectures,<sup>3</sup> tho' I really want printed copies for the use of my class. I shall, however, go on composing, as soon as I resume the lecture, in the summer time, and may perhaps publish them without my name, when they are all completed. I am fully convinced that, if I would make any thing of my philosophical work, I must make the world believe what is by no means true, that I mind nothing else. But there are many ways of ~~bein~~ imposing //upon// the world, as well as of being imposed upon by it.

I can now inform you that I must dispose of fifty more sets of this volume of the Repository, at the full price of six shillings, before I shall be indemnified for the expenses of attending the publication. For I am a loser rather more than 15£. But I hope that the work will be so established in time as to need no assistance of the kind that I am now obliged to ask.

I look upon my History of Discoveries relating to Vision Light and Colours<sup>4</sup> to be as good as finished, as little remains to be done besides transcribing, which however, is necessarily slow and tedious. There will be a good number of plates in this volume; but as I have spared no expense in the purchase of books &c for it, and no pains in the composition of it, I will not be sparing of any thing that may contribute to the elegance or dignity of it. I think it will appear to more advantage than the history of Electricity.<sup>5</sup> It is a much finer subject for history, and I can assure you it was full as much wanted. I am satisfied that few, or no persons have any idea of the discoveries that have been made in this branch of science. Indeed nothing but this undertaking, would have brought me acquainted with it, and no //person could// purchase the books in which the knowledge is contained under several hundred pounds. I think myself very fortunate in happening to begin with this subject. But after all so capricious is the public taste, that tho it be ever so well executed, it may not be well received; and then I shall go no farther with the undertaking. If I have tolerable success, ~~I th~~ and meet with no hindrances, I think I can dispatch the whole work in much less time than is imagined, and yet do it in the best manner that I am

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<sup>1</sup> Priestley, *A Free Address to Protestant Dissenters, as such* (London, 1769; second edn. London, 1771). See 30 Aug 1770.

<sup>2</sup> See 6 Dec 1770.

<sup>3</sup> See 6 Dec 1770.

<sup>4</sup> Priestley, *The History and Present State of Discoveries relating to Vision, Light, and Colours* (London, 1772).

<sup>5</sup> Priestley, *The History and Present State of Electricity* (London, 1767).

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capable of. But indeed I have no reason to complain of the reception of my philosophical works. My piece on Perspective,<sup>6</sup> I believe, is generally liked, and I hope will be useful. But I am sensible I have made myself many enemies by my Theology and controversy; which however I would [not] recall

You are the best judge whether Mr Mann<sup>7</sup> have anticipated your design with respect to the harmony – I ~~do~~ expect, however, the sequel of Patrobos<sup>8</sup> and the Remarks on the Intermediate state<sup>9</sup> from the Archdeacon's friend – I long to see Mr. Jebb's harmony<sup>10</sup> I ordered //it// as soon as ever I saw it advertised, but have not received it yet. – I hope you will not have occasion to keep my lectures much longer, but do not hurry yourself in the perusal of them, I want your opinion //both// of the plan and execution.

I am, with my respectful compliments to Mrs Lindsey,  
Dear Sir,  
yours sincerely  
J Priestley.

Leeds 23 Dec<sup>br</sup>. 1770.

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<sup>6</sup> Priestley, *A Familiar Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Perspective* (London, 1770).

<sup>7</sup> Nicholas Mann (bap. 1680?, d. 1753), see 1 Nov 1770.

<sup>8</sup> Socrates Scholasticus [Lindsey], 'Remarks on the Objections of Barmensis to the Socinian Hypothesis', *Theol. Repos.*, III (1771), 106-111, 249-251.

<sup>9</sup> Philander, 'An Attempt to prove that the Resurrection takes place immediately after Death', *Theol. Repos.*, II (1770), 346-395. Rutt identifies the author as Dr. Caleb Fleming [Rutt, I, i, 80-81].

<sup>10</sup> John Jebb (1736-1786), religious and political reformer [ODNB]. See Jebb's *A Short Account of Theological Lectures now reading at Cambridge. To which is added, a New Harmony of the Gospels* (Cambridge, 1770).