

15 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 9 March 1772

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 36-37

PRINTED: Rutt, I, i, pp. 161-163

ENDORSEMENT: March 9: 1772

[Mar 9. 1772.]

Dear Sir

I am truly sorry that I made the observation in my last on your application to parliament, ~~in~~ in which I am really much interested, and in the success of which I shall most sincerely rejoice. I cannot help thinking, however, that an application to temporal powers to remove religious grievances is a very different thing in those who continue in a state of voluntary subjection to them, and in those who never owned their authority. In the former case a request to make any alteration seems to be a recognition of a power either to make it or not to make it, whereas, in the latter case, it is only desiring a person to recede from a claim, which never has been, and never will be acknowledged. It is probable, however, that you and I may differ in several of our ideas on this subject, concerning which, in general, I refer you to the Address to Dissenters as such 2^d Edⁿ p 74, which I wish you would read once more, in order to put yourself into good humour with me.¹ I should be very sorry if this inadvertence should have displeased you, and affect a correspondence, from the revival of which I expect much pleasure and improvement.

Notwithstanding I am truly desirous to ~~to~~ secure the continuance of your correspondence, I begin to find the writing of necessary letters rather burdensome, on which account I decline all correspondence as much as possible. I have just finished a pretty long letter in Latin to a professor at Upsal, and another in French to an electrician at Como in the Milanese, and not being used to write those languages, it is rather irksome to me. They both wrote to me to lay claim to certain discoveries, having seen a translation which has lately been made of my History of Electricity into French. I am afraid ~~of~~ I shall have more trouble of the same kind; and doing justice will by no means please all.

You seem to think that the Dissenters would succeed in ~~their~~ an application to parliament, to get relieved from the obligation to subscribe, and that this would promote your business. I should be afraid that so many applications of the same kind would disgust our statesmen, as it might lead them to think th[at] if they once begun that work, there would be no end of it. But this I say quite at random. I shall most heartily join in any thing for the relief either of ourselves or you; but I really thought you would wish us to keep off for the present. I shall hear more of it when I am in London. I rejoice in every thing that occasion[s] a discussion of such important subjects.

¹ 'With numbers in the established church, I believe, my heart is in perfect unison. With some of them I know, and feel it to be so. They are men who, if they do not approve of the whole system, make the best use of their situation, in employing their most earnest endeavours to bring about a reformation of whatever they are convinced is amiss in it; though their pious labours are counteracted by those *who yet lett*, but who, it is hoped, will, in due time, be *taken out of the way*. With these persons notwithstanding we may, in some respects, see each others situation in different lights, it is not possible that I should have any difference of consequence. It can only consist in the choice of means to gain the same great ends; so that, though the parts we are acting be considerably different, we must mutually rejoice in each other's success; and that sympathetic union of heart and objects, that has commenced here, will, I trust, be completed, and be a source of mutual congratulation and happiness hereafter. Priestley, *A Free Address to Protestant Dissenters, as such* (London, 1771), second edn., 73-74.

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Your account with me I believe stands as follows

12 Appeals.....	1.0
12 Triumphs of Truth.....	1.0
12 Letters & Queries.....	2.0
Subscriptions from Mr Blackburne, ² Mr Joy ³ } Sir M. Wyvill, ⁴ and M ^{rs} Hargill ⁵ - }	4.4.0
12 Scripture Catechisms.....	3.0
12 Appeal.....	1.0
12 Triumphs of Truth.....	1.0
12 Letters & Queries.....	2.0
Institutes for Mr Reynolds ⁶	2.6
- D ^r Chambers ⁷	2.6
Scripture Catechism.....	0.3
	£ 5.0.3

I am not sure whether the three first articles be right, as I took no memorandum of them. I shall send //you// five copies of my History the next Waggon, insisting on your accepting of one for yourself.⁸

I shall be able to give you a better account of the Repository when I go to London, I never saw more than one copy of Elwall's⁹ trial, which was lent to me by a Quaker in this neighbourhood. I shall make inquiry about it in London. The Appeal,¹⁰ I am informed, makes the most noise in the West. An answer to it from a thorough Calvinist in those parts, I received the day before yesterday. This is the fifth answer I have seen.¹¹ – I have ready for the press, and shall print in London, A familiar illustration of all the texts of which the orthodox avail themselves ~~which will~~.¹² This will make a 3rd pamphlet, in the form of the Appeal, and complete the scheme of it. I shall send you a copy as soon as it is printed. – I inclose this in the last frank I have for you at present; but I shall get a fresh supply when I am in London.

My wife joins me in respectful compliments to yourself and M^{rs} Lindsey. I am

² Francis Blackburne (1705-1787), see 18 Dec 1769.

³ Thomas Joy (d. 1799), see 2 Mar 1772.

⁴ Sir Marmaduke Asty Wyvill (d. 1804), see 2 March 1770.

⁵ unidentified.

⁶ Richard Reynolds (d. 1814), see 4 Feb 1771.

⁷ William Chambers (1724?-1777), see 4 Feb 1771.

⁸ The preceding paragraph, and the account, is omitted from Rutt's edition.

⁹ Edward Elwall (bap. 1676, d. 1744), Seventh Day Baptist and religious controversialist [ODNB].

¹⁰ Priestley, *An Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity* (London, 1771; possibly an earlier edition printed at Leeds, 1770/1771). A fourth edition was published in 1772.

¹¹ See *An Answer to the Appeal to Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity. Extracted from Several Epistles to a Young Lady. Containing a Plenary Refutation of all the Books that ever were or ever will be wrote on that Subject. By a Believer of the Gospel* (Dublin, 1772); Cornelius Cayley, *An Answer to an Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity* (Leeds, 1771); Ambrose Serle, *An Answer to an Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity* (Leeds, 1771).

¹² Priestley, *A Familiar Illustration of certain Passages of Scripture relating to the Power of Man to do the Will of God, Original Sin, Election and Reprobation, the Divinity of Christ, and Atonement for Sin by the Death of Christ* (London, 1772).

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Dear Sir
Yours affectionately
J Priestley

Leeds. 9 March 1772.