

51 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 21 October 1789

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 101-102

PRINTED: Rutt, I, ii, pp. 36-37

ENDORSEMENT: N.B. Letter to B^p of S^t David's to be sent to D^r. Priestley.

Birm Oct 21. 1789

Dear friend

What I send now would have been dispatched on monday, but that I have [[been]] hindered by company till this time.¹ I sent you by M^r Russell's² parcell on thursday last the Preface to my Defences³ and the beginning of the Address to the Bps.⁴ I now send the remainder, but I have much to add. As it will not be published of a year, I wish you would, at your leisure, put down hints for it, and especially extracts from the Sermons &c of B late Bishops unfavourable to liberty and reformation. There are many things of this kind that I have not seen, especially Halifax's Sermon before the House of Lords.⁵ I also want all Bp Horsley's Sermons, except on the Incarnation⁶ and the last before the humane Society.⁷ These I have. I desired Johnson⁸ to send them long ago, but an order of this kind to him never produces anything.⁹

Mr Hawkes¹⁰ is exceedingly dissatisfied with my mode of address to Bp Horsley, and earnestly begs of me to reconsider it. He thinks the stile should be what is usual to a Bp; and he //is// also offended at //the// general harshness of my Letters to him. If all felt as he does, I should certainly write as he wishes. I wish you would think of this again. There is time enough for it, as I shall not print this month.¹¹

I have got the Westminster Magazine that I wanted.¹² It contains some curious articles of Mr Badcock's.¹³

The Prince¹⁴ has given leave to dedicate my Work to him in the handsomest manner saying, as I am informed, that he should think himself honoured by it. It was Mr Fox¹⁵ that spoke to him about it. Please to return the Dedication with your freest remarks.

¹ This sentence is omitted from Rutt's edition.

² William Russell (1740-1818), see 5 Jul 1786.

³ Priestley, *Defences of Unitarianism for the Years 1788 & 1789* (Birmingham, 1790).

⁴ See 31 Aug 1789.

⁵ Samuel Halifax, *A Sermon preached before the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in the Abbey Church of Westminster, on Wednesday, January 30, 1788. Being the Anniversary of King Charles's Martyrdom. By Samuel, Lord Bishop of Gloucester* (London, 1788).

⁶ Samuel Horsley, *On the Incarnation. A Sermon, preached in the Parish Church of St. Mary Newington, in Surrey, Dec. 25, 1785* (London, 1786).

⁷ Samuel Horsley, *On the Principle of Vitality in Man, as described in the Holy Scriptures, and the Difference between True and Apparent Death. A Sermon preached in the Parish Church of St. Andrew in Holborn, March 22, 1789, for the Benefit of the Humane Society* (London, 1789).

⁸ Joseph Johnson (1738-1809), see 18 Jan 1770.

⁹ This sentence is omitted from Rutt's edition.

¹⁰ William Hawkes (1731-1796), see 5 Jul 1786.

¹¹ This paragraph is omitted from Rutt's edition.

¹² For May 1774. See 12 Oct 1789.

¹³ Samuel Badcock, see 7 Sept 1789.

¹⁴ The Prince of Wales, to whom Priestley dedicated a new edition his *Experiments and Observations on Different Kinds of Air, and other Branches of Natural Philosophy, connected with the Subject*, 3 vols. (Birmingham, 1790) [Rutt, I, ii, 3].

¹⁵ Charles James Fox (1749-1806), see 14 May 1789.

On monday M^r Belsham¹⁶ called on me and I was very happy to spend a good part of it with him. He confirmed every thing you had said of the pleasure he has in his prospects.¹⁷ As he will soon give his lectures in ecclesiastical History, I promised him the first volume of my work,¹⁸ which I now send. I mentioned to him my design of giving away a good part of the impression of the History of early Opinions¹⁹ and in this he will assist me. Please to let him have what copies he wants, and when those you have are disposed of I will send more. The sooner they are well disposed of the better. I am told that there is hardly anything of mine in the Academical library. Suppose you send a copy from me, or yourself, as you think most proper.²⁰

You have seen what we have been doing here as Dissenters. It is all M^r Russell's. He drew up the Resolutions and Letter,²¹ and by an admirable address, and conciliating manner, carried it thro to universal satisfaction. ↯ Whatever he may say, I had no merit in the business, but that of appearing, and concurring.

I inclose, what we think proper for the Papers, as you, and Mr Heywood,²² shall direct.

I had not heard of M^r Watson's²³ pamphlet and wish you would send it me. I thank you for Mr Lofft's.²⁴ All these things draw attention.

Your account of the Sermon of the Bp of Peterbrg²⁵ is most curious. M^r Belsham had heard of it, and will get me such an account as I may quote – I thank you for the sight of Mr Turner's²⁶ letter.

Yours & M^{rs} Lindsey's

most affectionately

J Priestley

P.S. My wife has been worse, but thank God is now much better.

¹⁶ Thomas Belsham (1750-1829), see 3 Apr 1789.

¹⁷ In 1789 Belsham had resigned from his post at Daventry and taken up the posts of professor of divinity and resident tutor at New College, Hackney.

¹⁸ Priestley, *A General History of the Christian Church, to the Fall of the Western Empire*, 2 vols. (Birmingham, 1790).

¹⁹ Priestley, *An History of Early Opinions concerning Jesus Christ, compiled from Original Writers; proving that the Christian Church was at First Unitarian*, 4 vols. (Birmingham, 1786).

²⁰ The previous two sentences are omitted from Rutt's edition.

²¹ See Committee of the Seven Congregations of the Three Denominations of Protestant Dissenters, in Birmingham, *At a Numerous Meeting of Deputies from the Seven Congregations of the Three Denominations of Dissenters, in Birmingham, held at the Hotel, in Birmingham, on Wednesday the Fourteenth Day of October, 1789* (Birmingham, 1789). The publication is signed by William Russell.

²² Samuel Heywood (1753-1828), judge and author of *The Right of Protestant Dissenters to a Compleat Toleration Asserted* (1787; second edn., 1789) [ODNB].

²³ ? Richard Watson (1737-1816), *Considerations on the Expediency of revising the Liturgy and Articles of the Church of England: in which Notice is taken of the Objections to that Measure, urged in Two Late Pamphlets, by a Consistent Protestant* (London, 1790).

²⁴ Capel Lofft (1751-1824), radical editor and writer [ODNB]. The pamphlet is *Observations on the First Part of Dr. Knowles's Testimonies from the Writers of the First Four Centuries* (Bury [St. Edmunds], 1789).

²⁵ John Hinchliffe (1731-1794), Bishop of Peterborough [ODNB].

²⁶ William Turner (1714-1794), see 30 Mar 1770.