

63 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 26 February 1790

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 129-130

PRINTED: Rutt, I, ii, pp. 53-54¹

ADDRESS: The Rev^d Mr Lindsey Essex Street London

[Mar (~~before 12~~) //before 11// 1790]

Dear friend

I return the Letters you were so good as to send for my perusal. They have given me much pleasure. Notwithstanding some appearances of darkness in the atmosphere, I think that on the whole the face of things is very promising. I send also a letter I had from Mr Robinson² in answer to mine, inviting him to preach our charity sermon, as I think it will please you. His desertion of Orthodoxy, and Mr Belsham's³ of Arianism, are great - triumphs, and, I doubt not, stagger many.

I told you of a local controversy ~~wh~~ with a very popular clergyman⁴ in this town, which I could not well avoid. I send you a few copies of my Letters⁵ on the occasion, which you will give as you think proper, not forgetting M^{rs} Rayner,⁶ whom it may amuse for an evening. I am much pleased with all her verses, as well as with every thing else that she does. I rejoice that [[s]]he retains so much spirit, and a so cheerful a disposition as these pretty verses show at her time of life. May she retain them, to the last, and long. I begin to think with pleasure of our approaching interview, in Titchfield Street. More agreeable hours I do not wish to spend in -? another world than many I have spent there.

Would Mr Belsham object to publishing the sermon he delivered at your place, together with that excellent one you heard from him in Leather Lane?⁷

Since I wrote this M^r Walker⁸ of Nottingham is come in order to arrange matters for the meeting at Tamworth tomorrow, and I must spend the day with him.

The spirit of party here is astonishing. Mr Russell⁹ says measures are taken to ring the bells, and illuminate the town on the expected event of tuesday next, and in that case we apprehend the mob will be instigated to do mischief. We think to apply to Mr Garbett,¹⁰ Mr Boulton,¹¹ and a few others to prevent it.

I am glad to hear of the intention to answer the two bishops with respect to the Hints.¹² That from Horsley¹³ is most impudent. How he mentions Mr Wakefield!¹⁴

¹ The MS is undated. Rutt dates the letter Feb 26 1790.

² Robert Robinson (1735-1790), see 26 Aug 1787.

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

⁴ Edward Burn (1762-1837), curate and lecturer at St. Mary's Chapel, Birmingham [ODNB].

⁵ Priestley, *Letters to the Rev. Edward Burn, of St. Mary's Chapel, Birmingham, in answer to his, on the Infallibility of the Apostolic Testimony, concerning the Person of Christ* (Birmingham, 1790).

⁶ Elizabeth Rayner (d. 1800), see 17 May 1786.

⁷ At the ordination of Revd Edmund Butcher, see *Memoirs of Lindsey*, 291-292; Rutt I, ii, 54.

⁸ George Walker (1734?-1807), see 20 March 1787.

⁹ William Russell (1740-1818), see 5 Jul 1786.

¹⁰ Samuel Garbett (1717-1803), industrialist and ironmaster [ODNB].

¹¹ Matthew Boulton (1728-1809), manufacturer and entrepreneur, member of the Lunar Society [ODNB].

¹² Augustus Henry Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton, *Hints, &c. submitted to Serious Attention of the Clergy, Nobility and Gentry, newly associated, by a Layman, a Friend to the True Principles of the Constitution, in Church and State, and to Religious and Civil Liberty* (London, 1789).

¹³ Samuel Horsely (1733-1806), see 17 May 1786. Probably a reference to *An Apology for the Liturgy and Clergy of the Church of England: in Answer to a Pamphlet, entitled Hints, &c. submitted to the Serious*

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But I must conclude in haste
yours & M^{rs} Lindsey's
most affectionately
J Priestley
My wife desires to be remembered to you
I trouble you all a l[?]

Attention of the Clergy, Nobility, and Gentry (London, 1790), attributed to Horsley on ESTC. Rutt claims however that the attribution is erroneous [Rutt, I, ii, 54].

¹⁴ Gilbert Wakefield (1756-1801), see 3 Apr 1789.