

24 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 24 March 1787

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 52-53

PRINTED: Rutt, I, i, pp. 405-406

ADDRESS: The Rev^d Mr Lindsey Essex Street London

[Mar 24. 1787]

Dear friend

I hope you would receive mine, by Mr Kenrick,¹ soon after you wrote your last. I still keep the same resolution, so that I hope to knock at your door between one and two (perhaps sooner) on tuesday next. This I hope to send by the coach, along with a copy of the Repository, which we have just printed off, and this is not a day on which I can write by the post.

I shall immediately shew Mr Russell² your letters, but I believe he has done all he can in the business, so that it must take its chance. Our disappointment will, at least, give occasion to such publications, as will give us some advantage in the eyes of the more sensible part of the Public and may in time make adversaries ashamed.³ As to [[the]] thing itself, it would certainly be honourable to the country; but as a Xⁿ, I am not much concerned about it. It may not be amiss that there should be some things to remind dissenters that they are not of this world. In too many particulars they are sufficiently conformed to it, and favoured by it. I do not envy the Bps and D^r Horsley⁴ their present triumph. They have not the peace and satisfaction of mind that we have, and it is too much to expect to enjoy our advantages and theirs too. Ours is infinitely the better portion, and surely we ought to be thankful for it as such.

I shall be glad to see D^r Tower's⁵ abridgem^t of Hoadley's tract,⁶ tho I //have// never read it, and indeed hardly any thing of Hoadley's. What I have read of his appeared tedious – I am glad to hear your account of Mr Lee;⁷ but I cannot think very highly of a man who will desert his principles, and his old friends, for such political resentments as you speak of.⁸

You will perhaps smile at a work I think I may possibly undertake, merely because it is much wanted, an Ecclesiastical History,⁹ at least of some of the first centuries. All that we have are on trinitarian principles, [and] impress all readers in favour of them. I think too it may be so drawn up as to be //sufficiently// **interesting**

¹ ? Timothy Kenrick (1759-1804), see 20 Mar 1787.

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

³ The motion for the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts had recently been defeated in Parliament by 178 votes to 100.

⁴ Samuel Horsley (1733-1806), see 17 May 1786.

⁵ Joseph Towers (1737-1799), biographer and Presbyterian minister [ODNB].

⁶ Benjamin Hoadly (1676-1761), *Bishop Hoadly's Refutation of Bishop Sherlock's Arguments against a Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts: wherein the Justice and Reasonableness of such a Repeal are clearly evinced* was reprinted in 1787 (London: Charles Dilly). A preface was attached addressed to 'the Right Honorable William Pitt' recommending 'the sentiments of Bishop Hoadly' as founded on 'justice, truth, and reason' and asserting that 'A Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts would be a wise, just, and patriotic measure', iv.

⁷ John Lee (1733-1793), see Mar 1770.

⁸ The second part of this sentence is omitted from Rutt's edition.

⁹ Priestley, *A General History of the Christian Church, to the Fall of the Western Empire*, 2 vols. (Birmingham, 1790).

24 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 24 March 1787

interesting, and not very long, or tedious. When I see you, I shall talk with you about this, and some other schemes. In the mean time, and till I have the pleasure of seeing you, I subscribe myself

yours & M^{rs} Lindsey's
most affectionately
J Priestley.

Birm 24 March 1787.