

31 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 29 August 1787

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 64-65

PRINTED: Rutt, I, i, pp. 407-409<sup>1</sup>

ADDRESS: The Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr Lindsey Essex Street London

POSTMARK: Aug 30 1787

[27. Aug 29 1787]

Dear friend

I have such perfect confidence in your judgment, that I cannot but approve, and thank you for the step you have taken, tho I cannot say that I think ~~to~~ a letter to the Gentleman's Magazine would have been less proper, and it would have been less expensive. My former declaration was annexed to an Advertisem<sup>t</sup> of a book, and therefore shewed less alarm than the present; and there is, in truth, less cause for it. A more peevish and ill judged performance than Mr Howes<sup>2</sup> I hardly ever saw. I shall be in no haste to reply, and the more the adversary triumphs in it, the more satisfaction it will give me.<sup>3</sup> As to those who decide against any cause on account of an inconsiderable mistake in the defenders of it, I do not wish to have them with me. [Let] them have their proper punishment by continuing in their present ignoran[ce.] They love darkness rather than light, and let them have it – I am now busy in preparing my Lect[ures] on history,<sup>4</sup> and in making experiments, and about a month hence I shall think of Mr Howes, tho I may perhaps send you a Letter for the Gentleman's Magazine the next month. I really think that a better measure than advertising on many occasions but I shall submit to your better judgement. Mr Howes's scheme is really too silly to deserve notice and his arguments are weak in the extreme. They are ~~to~~ //even// more contemptible than those of D<sup>r</sup> Hors[ley].<sup>5</sup>

I beg my respects and thanks to Mr Reynolds<sup>6</sup> for his kind benefaction. I did not know that he meant it to be annual. I hear nothing of Mr Shores.<sup>7</sup> Have you heard any more of his offence at my Letter to Mr Pitt.<sup>8</sup> I think D<sup>r</sup> Price's Sermon<sup>9</sup> justifies my

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<sup>1</sup> Rutt's edition dates this letter 29 May 1787.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Howes (1728-1814), see 17 May 1786. Howes had published the second installment of the fourth volume of his *Critical Observations on Books, Antient and Modern* in 1787.

<sup>3</sup> Priestley eventually replied to Howes's arguments in Part II of his *Defences of Unitarianism for the Year 1787, relating to Mr. Howes's Appendix to his Fourth Volume of Observations on Books, a Letter by an Undergraduate of Oxford, Dr. Croft's Bampton Lectures, and Several Other Publications* (London, 1788).

<sup>4</sup> Priestley, *Lectures on History, and General Policy; to which is prefixed, an Essay on a Course of Liberal Education for Civil and Active Life* (Birmingham, 1788).

<sup>5</sup> Samuel Horsley (1733-1806), see 17 May 1786.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Reynolds (1728?-1814), see 4 Feb 1771.

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Shore (1738?-1828), see 26 Aug 1787.

<sup>8</sup> Priestley, *A Letter to the Right Honourable William Pitt, First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the Subjects of Toleration and Church Establishments; occasioned by his Speech against the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, on Wednesday the 28th of March, 1787* (London, 1787). A second edition was published in the same year.

<sup>9</sup> Richard Price, *Sermons on the Christian Doctrine as received by the Different Denominations of Christians. To which are added, Sermons on the Security and Happiness of a Virtuous Course on the Goodness of God and the Resurrection of Lazarus* (London, 1787).

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Letter,<sup>10</sup> and will give as much offence. I admire it very much.<sup>11</sup> I have not seen the Pamphlet you mention printed for Robinson,<sup>12</sup> and wish that Mr Johnson<sup>13</sup> would send it me.

D<sup>r</sup> Disney<sup>14</sup> did, indeed, deserve more than I gave him. But the thing is over, and I did not care to give him unnecessary pain. If the mistake should be noticed, I shall be obliged to make a confession that may involve him, tho I will not name any body if I can help it. In his answer, he says he has not yet found any authority whatever. It is indeed [high?]ly improbable in many respects. At least 30 copies were sold uncorrected.

If, by any accident, your advertisement should not be printed, I rather wish you would stop it, as I think I can send you something //that// you will like better. But it is of no great consequence how it is done.

With all our respects I am,  
yours & M<sup>rs</sup> Lindsey's  
most affectionately  
J Priestley

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<sup>10</sup> Priestley, *Letters to Dr. Horne, Dean of Canterbury; to the Young Men, who are in a Course of Education for the Christian Ministry, at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge; to Dr. Price; and to Mr. Parkhurst; on the Subject of the Person of Christ* (London, 1787).

<sup>11</sup> Rutt's text ends here.

<sup>12</sup> ? Joseph Berington, *An Address to the Protestant Dissenters, who have lately petitioned for a Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts*, sold by J. Robinson of Pater Noster-Row (Birmingham, 1787).

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Johnson (1738-1809), see 18 Jan 1770.

<sup>14</sup> John Disney (1746-1816), see 11 Jan 1787.