

37 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 20 October 1788

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 76-77

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ADDRESS: The Rev^d Mr Lindsey Essex Street London

Birm Oct 20. 1788

Dear friend

You will think it a long time sine I wrote to you; but I have been to pay Mr Tayleur¹ a visit at Shrewsbury, from which I returned last night. I had intended, indeed, to have written from thence, but did not find time. My wife accompanied me, and I hope we are both the better for the excursion. We found the old Gentleman quite as well as I expected, and had, I believe, mutual satisfaction in the interview, tho it would have been greatly heightened had you and M^{rs} Lindsey been of the party. Mr Tayleur's generosity has no bounds He insisted on my accepting another hundred pounds, which will replace that which I returned to Mr Russell² He seemed much pleased with the Preface to my edition of the life of Marolles, &c³ which I now send you, and which I therefore hope you will not dislike.

When I wrote last, I did not care to ~~ment~~ mention it, as I was in hopes it would be very transi[ent] but I was in great pain in consequence of passing some gall stones. However, it kept increasing, and for the greatest part of the week following I was not capable of writing, reading, or any thing; I recovered, but on tuesday last I had another fit at my daughters, on the road to Shrewsbury and had thoughts of returning; but happily it went off, and I was able to pursue my journey. At present I feel tolerably well, and with care hope to do well, but I must ~~-2-~~ live chiefly on vegetables

Since my last I have given almost all the time I could to some experiments relating to Phlogiston, and have drawn up a third Paper to send to the Royal Society.⁴ However, I do every day more or less at my Church History,⁵ and think I shall easily finish one 8^{vo} volume to send you in long hand against my April visit. At least I shall do my endeavour. I want Ruffini Opera,⁶ as one of his works is a history, tho a poor one.

At Shrewsbury I heard an alarming account of Mr Towgood,⁷ who will be as much missed, as most people, especially on account of his activity in promoting the New Academy. One account said that he was dead.

I send you Mr Hutton's⁸ letter, and should be glad if one of the things to be sent him might be my History of the Early Opinions.⁹

¹ Wiliam Tayleur (1713-1796), see 20 Mar 1787.

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

³ Priestley, *An History of the Sufferings of Mr. Lewis de Marolles, and Mr. Isaac Le Fevre, upon the Revocation of the Edict of Nantz. To which is prefixed, a General Account of the Treatment of the Protestants in the Gallies of France* (Birmingham, 1788).

⁴ Priestley, 'Objections to the Experiments and Observations relating to the Principle of Acidity, the Composition of Water, and Phlogiston, considered; with Farther Experiments and Observations on the Same Subject', *Phil. Trans.*, LXXIX (1789).

⁵ Priestley, *A General History of the Christian Church, to the Fall of the Western Empire*, 2 vols. (Birmingham, 1790).

⁶ Tyrannius Rufinus (c. 345-410), theologian, translator of Greek patristic texts into Latin. Rufinus translated the *Historia Ecclesiastica* (Church History) of Eusebius.

⁷ Matthew Towgood (1732-1791), Presbyterian minister and tutor [ODNB].

⁸ Joseph Hutton, see 29 Jun 1788.

Here I receive your favour, and I thank you for the various interesting intelligence you send me. I shall be glad to receive the letters &c¹⁰ you mention. It often happens that friends give us more concern than enemies. I now fulfil my promise in sending you Mr Hobson's¹¹ letter, and my answer. He is a man similar to Mr Palmer,¹² but without his learning. If you see Mr Vaughan¹³ desire him still to accept of Mr Russell's¹⁴ draught for 5 pounds. He had notice almost a year ago, but may have forgotten it. Mr Russell has insisted on refunding that sum to me. I cannot think well of Mr Robinson,¹⁵ let him now be ever so declared an unitarian, if he really was one when he wrote his plea.¹⁶ The fact however may be useful. Treason may be useful, tho the traitor be detested. I am glad there are some hopes of Mr Towgood, and that Mr Lee¹⁷ is so well.

Return Marolles. It is not finished

The papers for the Repository to remain with Mr Johnson.¹⁸ Mr F Palmer¹⁹ will send for his.

⁹ 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).

¹⁰ Rutt: letter, &c [Rutt, I, ii, 13].

¹¹ John Hobson, minister of Kingswood Chapel, near Birmingham, 1787-1791.

¹² ? Thomas Fyshe Palmer (1747-1802), see 14 Jul 1787.

¹³ ? Benjamin Vaughan (1751-1835), see 14 May 1789.

¹⁴ William Russell (1740-1818), see 5 Jul 1786.

¹⁵ Robert Robinson (1735-1790), see 26 Aug 1787.

¹⁶ Robert Robinson, *A Plea for the Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. In a Pastoral Letter addressed to a Congregation of Protestant Dissenters at Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1776).

¹⁷ John Lee (1733-1793), see Mar 1770.

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

¹⁹ Thomas Fyshe Palmer (1747-1802), see 14 Jul 1787.