

44 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 22 July 1789

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 88-89

PRINTED: Rutt, I, ii, pp. 26-27

ADDRESS: The Rev^d Mr Lindsey at Mrs Blackburne's Richmond Yorkshire

Birm. July 22 1789

Dear friend

You¹ time you and M^{rs} Lindsey passed at Birmingham appears now as a pleasant dream, which I hope, however, will often be repeated, before we awake in a state where I trust we shall ~~not~~ separate no more. I follow your direction in writing to you at Richmond, and hope it will arrive in time.

After the agreeable relaxation which you gave me I have applied pretty closely to my different pursuits. To the article of Constantine² I have added Remarks on what Mr Gibbon³ says of the causes of his conversion,⁴ which I think you will not dislike. I shall //read// his history very carefully, as far as it coincides with mine, and shall add other remarks if ~~not~~ any occur. In philosophy, I have several experiments of particular consequence, especially relating to respiration.⁵

My wife continues pretty well. She is now at Bar[r] with M^{rs} Galton,⁶ and I am about to go and dine and spend the evening with them. There I am to meet M^r Berington,⁷ and a relation of his,⁸ who is a bishop among the Catholics.

We shall have some trouble about our man servant. He is certainly a thief, and is to leave us.

Mr Finch⁹ is likely to have some trouble with his cousin John Finch, who, as heir at Law, claims all that the uncle purchased after the will was made. He is one of the executors, and had 100l left to him as a legacy. Nothing can be clearer than the intention of the old man, to leave all to W^m Finch, except the legacies &c that were specified. Mr John Finch is very rich, worth at least twice as much as the old man, and has had a great character for religion. He was also very fond of my daughter, and the two cousins had

¹ Rutt: The [Rutt, I, ii, 26].

² See Priestley, *A General History of the Christian Church, to the Fall of the Western Empire*, 2 vols. (Birmingham, 1790), vol. ii, 106-111.

³ Edward Gibbon (1737-1794), see 3 Apr 1789.

⁴ See 10 Nov 1789.

⁵ See Priestley, 'Observations on Respiration', *Phil. Trans.*, LXXX (1790).

⁶ Lucy Galton [née Barclay] (d. 1817), wife of Samuel Galton (1720-1799).

⁷ Joseph Berington (1743-1827), see 29 Jun 1788. In the late 1780s Berington was stationed at a small mission at Oscott, Handsworth, Staffordshire. While serving the mission, Berington attended social meetings at Barr with Joseph Priestley, Matthew Boulton, and James Watt [J. P. Chinnici, 'Berington, Joseph (1743-1827)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn.].

⁸ Bishop Charles Berington (1748-1798). Berington's cousin and the coadjutor to Thomas Talbot, vicar apostolic of the midland district, both of whom would eventually protect Berington from severe ecclesiastical censure [Thompson Cooper, 'Berington, Charles (1748-1798)', rev. John Sharp, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn.].

⁹ William Finch, see 11 Jun 1787.

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always been upon good terms. This will make a sad breach, and be the source of much unhappiness. The thing in dispute is about a thousand pounds.¹⁰

The disturbances in Paris, of which you will have heard, gave us much uneasiness on account of William¹¹ who is in the very midst of them.

If you see Mr Lee,¹² give my particular respects [to him, //a]nd M^{rs} Lee¹³// and consult him about the propriet[y] an[d] practicability of dedicating //to him// ~~the~~ new edition of my volumes of Experiments.¹⁴

Please to say nothing about Mr Finch's affair, except, if you please, to Mr Lee in confidence. We cannot tell what turn the thing may take yet.

With every good wish, and respects to Mr Blackburne,¹⁵ & Frank,¹⁶ I am, yours & M^{rs} Lindsey's,
most affectionately
J Priestley

¹⁰ The previous two paragraphs are omitted from Rutt's edition.

¹¹ William Priestley (b. 1771). For an account of the reading of a letter sent by William Priestley from Paris in 1789 see Mary Anne Schimmelpenninck (1778-1856), *Life of Mary Anne Schimmelpenninck, Author of 'Select memoirs of Port Royal'*, ed. Christiana C. Hankin (London, 1860), fourth edn., 182.

¹² John Lee (1733-1793), see Mar 1770.

¹³ Mary Lee (1691/2-1750), 4 May 1789.

¹⁴ Rutt: dedicating to the Prince of Wales the new edition of my volumes of experiments [Rutt, I, ii, 27]. Rutt's text ends here.

¹⁵ ? William Blackburne M.D., son of Francis Blackburne (1705-1787), see 4 May 1789.

¹⁶ ? Francis Blackburne, vicar of Brignal, son of Francis Blackburne (1705-1787).