

46 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, August (after 14) 1789

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 92-93

PRINTED: Rutt, I, ii, 28-29¹

ADDRESS: The Rev^d Mr Lindsey Essex Street London

[Aug 14 1789 (after 14th)]

Dear friend

With this I send my Dedication, and Preface,² wishing you would shew the former to Mr Shore,³ and return them both the first convenient opportunity. It was hardly //possible// to avoid some similarity of sentiment in this dedication, and that to you.⁴ I will alter, if you think it necessary, or omit the paragraph altogether.

Mr Bakewell⁵ of Burton Upon Trent has just breakfasted with me, and desired me to forward the inclosed petition to Lady Hewley's⁶ trustees. As Mr Shore is one, I send it along with the dedication, with my recommendation annexed, which I am sure will be strengthened by your own.

I also inclose a pleasing anecdote copied from a letter from Mr Hawkes⁷ of Manchester to his father which will give you pleasure. I shall endeavour to send some books to Oldham.

Mr Belsham⁸ has been here, and tells me that Mr Kenrick of Exeter⁹ is become an Unitarian, and thinks that in consequence of it, it may be necessary for him to leave his congregation; but we both ~~think~~ //are of opinion// he should not think of doing it till he find staying with them //will// be disagreeable to the congregation.¹⁰ At present he has only received an anonymous letter, complaining of his change of ~~?~~ sentiment, which he says gave him pleasure, as a proof that he had spoken so as to be understood. He gave me other pleasing instances of the progress of unitarianism that had come to his knowledge.

¹ In Rutt's edition the letter is dated simply 'Aug. 1789'.

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

³ Samuel Shore (1738-1828), see 26 Aug 1787. The work was dedicated to Shore.

⁴ For Priestley's *An History of the Corruptions of Christianity*, 2 vols. (Birmingham, 1782).

⁵ William Bakewell of Burton upon Trent, listed as a member of the Unitarian Society for promoting Christian Knowledge and the Practice of Virtue, 1794. See *Unitarian Society* (London, 1794).

⁶ Sarah Hewley, Lady Hewley (1627-1710). The Hewley Trust, which was specifically designed as a northern charity of national significance, was founded by the deeds of 13 January 1705 and 26 April 1707: it institutionalized the support of 'poor and godly Preachers' and their 'poor and godly widows'; the education of 'young men designed for the ministry'; and the propagation of the gospel in 'poor places'; and provided a York hospital for 'widows or unmarried women' fifty-five years old or over [P. J. Withington, 'Hewley, Sarah, Lady Hewley (1627-1710)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn.].

⁷ William Hawkes jnr. (1759-1820), see 9 Mar 1789.

⁸ Thomas Belsham (1750-1829), see 3 Apr 1789.

⁹ Timothy Kenrick (1759-1804), see 20 March 1787.

¹⁰ Although, after continued criticism, Kenrick did eventually offer to resign in April 1793, the separate petitions of support from the men and women in his congregation persuaded him to withdraw his resignation. He none the less considered escaping the atmosphere of religious and political intolerance in Britain by following the example of his brother-in-law Ralph Eddowes, and emigrating to the United States, yet concern for the health and welfare of his wife and family seems to have dissuaded him. By 1798 he had decided to stay in Exeter, for he declined the invitation to become divinity professor at Manchester Academy [Alexander Gordon, 'Kenrick, Timothy (1759-1804)', rev. S. J. Skedd, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, online edn.].

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Mr Bakewell says they shall introduce an Unitarian liturgy, in the use of which several now members of the church of England will join them; but ~~¶~~ //I think// from his account, that much will not be done while their present minister, Mr Holland,¹¹ is living, but he is about 70. I was much pleased with Mr Bakewell, who has both a philosophical and theological turn.

Mr Gibbon's Article¹² does not turn out quite so bad as it appeared at first. He had copied with some exaggeration from Fleury,¹³ and given a wrong reference.

We finish the first volume of the History¹⁴ this week, and early in the next I hope to send you a copy. We have also begun to print of an Collection of Psalms.¹⁵

With my best respects to you both

Yours & M^{rs} Lindsey's

most affectionately

J Priestley.

P.S. Get me if possible D^r Horsley's Latin Prospectus,¹⁶ and all his Sermons not contained in the volume of Controversy.¹⁷

¹¹ Benjamin Holland (d. 1795), minister at Burton-on-Trent, Staffs. and Castle Donington, Leics. (1754-1793) [*Gent. Mag.*, LXV (1795), 357] [CSICM 1863].

¹² Edward Gibbon (1737-1794), see 3 Apr 1789.

¹³ Claude Fleury (1640-1723), see 7 Feb 1789.

¹⁴ Priestley, *A General History of the Christian Church, to the Fall of the Western Empire*, 2 vols. (Birmingham, 1790), vol. i.

¹⁵ *Psalms and Hymns for the use of the New Meeting in Birmingham* (Birmingham: J. Thompson, 1790).

¹⁶ unidentified.

¹⁷ Samuel Horsley, *Tracts in Controversy with Dr. Priestley upon the Historical Question of the Belief of the First Ages in our Lord's Divinity* (Gloucester, 1789).