

47 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 31 August 1789

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 94-95

PRINTED: Rutt, I, ii, pp. 29-30

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

Birm. Aug 31. 1789

Dear friend

I have received the Preface &c, and shall some time hence return the Dedication<sup>1</sup> altered, I hope, to your mind, but there is no haste, as, in consequence of a cabal[?] among our Compositors, the work goes on but slowly at present.<sup>2</sup>

I have only Rigaltius's edition of Tertullian,<sup>3</sup> which I believe is very common. If Mr Hamilton<sup>4</sup> has it not, and wishes to see it, it is at his service.

My Letters to D<sup>r</sup> Horsley<sup>5</sup> are now transcribed, and I wish to get them into your hands as soon as possible. But as you ~~will~~ hardly ~~to~~ be in town till the latter end of the week, I will keep them till I can send those to Mr Barnard<sup>6</sup> and D<sup>r</sup> Knowles<sup>7</sup> along with them. At the same time, I will send another copy of the first volume of my History<sup>8</sup> for your use, and desire Mr Dodson<sup>9</sup> to keep his. I shall complete it, as the sheets are printed, and desire his acceptance of it.<sup>10</sup>

I know you will not like the Letters in their present state, but their asperities will be rubbed off, and many improvements may be introduced, before the time of publication. I could not well repress my indignation at the time of writing.

On tuesday next I have agreed to set out for Castle head, with my daughter<sup>11</sup> and Mr Finch,<sup>12</sup> an[d] may stay three weeks. I wish therefore you would write to me there, and let me know what you think of my letters in general. Particular remarks you may reserve till you return them after my return. You will observe that the style of address is not yet fetched upon. I have only written My Lord at the beginning of each letter. In this, as in every thing else, I shall be governed by you.<sup>13</sup> You will note what I say of his Newton<sup>14</sup> &c and, if you can, get me the necessary authorities. I really //think// so insolent a writer should be exposed.

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<sup>1</sup> For *A General History of the Christian Church, to the Fall of the Western Empire*, 2 vols. (Birmingham, 1790).

<sup>2</sup> This paragraph is omitted from Rutt's edition.

<sup>3</sup> Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullian (c. 160-225), African Church Father [ODCC]; Nicolas Rigault [Latin: Rigaltius] (1577-1654), French philologist, editor of *Q. Septimii Florentis Tertulliani Opera* (Paris, 1634).

<sup>4</sup> James Edward Hamilton, author of *Strictures upon Primitive Christianity, by the Rev. Dr. Knowles* (London, 1790).

<sup>5</sup> Samuel Horsley (1733-1806), see 17 May 1786. Priestley's letters to Horsley were published as part of *Defences of Unitarianism for the Years 1788 & 1789* (Birmingham, 1790).

<sup>6</sup> James Barnard (1733-1803), see *Defences of Unitarianism for the Years 1788 & 1789* (1790).

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Knowles (1723-1802), see *Defences of Unitarianism for the Years 1788 & 1789* (1790).

<sup>8</sup> Priestley, *A General History of the Christian Church, to the Fall of the Western Empire*, 2 vols. (1790), vol. i.

<sup>9</sup> Michael Dodson (1732-1799), see 27 Nov 1787.

<sup>10</sup> The previous two sentences are omitted from Rutt's edition.

<sup>11</sup> Sarah Priestley (1763-1803), see 5 July 1786.

<sup>12</sup> William Finch, see 11 Jun 1787.

<sup>13</sup> The previous three sentences are omitted from Rutt's edition.

<sup>14</sup> Samuel Horsley, *Isaaci Newtoni Opera quae exstant Omnia*, 5 vols. (London, 1779-1785).

47 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 31 August 1789

You must not expect any thing materially new in these Letters, and I think that this will probably be my last Defence of Unitarianism.<sup>15</sup> I have just begun my Address to the Bishops, which will be published the year following.<sup>16</sup>

You must not despair of yourself, tho you perceive a failure in your memory. I do the same. However ~~?~~ //spare// yourself. You will last the longer. I am far from being a close student. I never fatigue myself in the least, and generally could do twice as much as I do. But I purposely relax a little, as I advise you to do.

I have the translation much at heart, and doubt not we shall have a very good one. I thank you for the Letters. They are in Mr Russells<sup>17</sup> hands, and tomorrow I shall send them to Mr Tayleur.<sup>18</sup>

Mr & M<sup>rs</sup> Finch<sup>19</sup> (late with us) and my wife who continues very well desire their best remembrances.

yours & M<sup>rs</sup> Lindsey's most affectionately  
J Priestley.

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<sup>15</sup> *Defences of Unitarianism for the Years 1788 & 1789* was Priestley's last.

<sup>16</sup> Priestley later abandoned his plans to publish the *Address to the Bishops*, see Rutt, I, ii, 3; Priestley, *Defences of Unitarianism for the Years 1788 & 1789* (1790), xiii.

<sup>17</sup> William Russell (1740-1818), see 5 Jul 1786.

<sup>18</sup> William Tayleur (1713-1796), see 20 March 1787.

<sup>19</sup> Sara Priestley (1763-1803), see 5 July 1786; William Finch, see 11 Jun 1787.