

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 107-108

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

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Heath Nov 18 1789

Dear friend

I am now at Heath, and having a little leisure, I cannot employ it more agreeably to myself than in writing to you. It was very fortunate that M<sup>r</sup> Friend<sup>1</sup> met my son<sup>2</sup> at Frankfort. His account of him is very grateful to his parents. I hope he will behave so as to gain friends. His uncle's<sup>3</sup> behaviour to him was harsh and unfeeling, tho I believe he did every thing in his power not to offend him.<sup>4</sup> He is, however, very happily situated, in an agreeable family, and with agreeable acquaintance particularly a Mr Miles<sup>5</sup> who he says is uncommonly civil to him from his respect to me. I do not know him, but Mr Friend does, and W<sup>m</sup> says he was to send him some of my publications.

A new antagonist has announced himself and almost as unexpectedly ~~?~~ as Mr Badcock.<sup>6</sup> It is Mr H. Croft<sup>7</sup> the compiler of the new Dictionary of the English Language, who has often called upon me, and written to me on that subject, and to whom I gave a quantity of materials which I had collec[ted] for a large work on the structure and present state of our language, when I was at Warrington. In a very civil letter, he informs me that he is "reprinting a book against the Socinians of the last age, corrected in the way he means to correct the quotations in his Dictionary, and that to this he subjoins a Letter to me, which he hopes will be in time to be noticed in my X<sup>mas</sup> publication[.]"<sup>8</sup> I am very glad that he has made choice of this kind of book, as it may draw some more attention on the subject. His own views, I suspect, are preferment. I had always considered him as a mere belles lettres man.

I have sent a part of my Defences<sup>9</sup> to the press. There are many important additions, which I hope you will not dislike. I shall send you the sheets as ~~you~~ I have

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<sup>1</sup> William Friend (1757-1841), see 29 Jun 1788. See Frida Knight, *University Rebel: the Life of William Friend (1757-1841)* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1971), 74-5, 79, which gives an account of the incident although does not identify 'Mr Miles'.

<sup>2</sup> William Priestley (b. 1771), see 5 July 1786.

<sup>3</sup> John Wilkinson (1728-1808), see 17 May 1786.

<sup>4</sup> The previous three sentences are omitted from Rutt's edition.

<sup>5</sup> ? William Augustus Miles (1753?-1817), 'A well-known political Pamphleteer, sufficiently addicted to scurrility' [David Rivers, *Literary Memoirs of Living Authors of Great Britain, arranged according to an Alphabetical Catalogue and including a List of their Works* (London, 1798), 43], author of *The Conduct of France towards Great Britain examined* (London, 1793), and pamphlets addressed to the Duke of Grafton and Earl Stanhope.

<sup>6</sup> Samuel Badcock (1747-1788), see 7 Sept 1789.

<sup>7</sup> Sir Herbert Croft (1751-1816), writer and lexicographer [ODNB; Rutt, I, ii, 46].

<sup>8</sup> See John Norris, *An Account of Reason and Faith, with an Address to Socinians; by John Norris, A.M. (Nat. 1657. Ob. 1711.) Rector of Bemerton. The Fourteenth Edition. Corrected for a New Grammar and Dictionary of the English Language; by Herbert Croft LL.B. Vicar of Prittlewell, Essex. To which is added, by the Editor, a Dedication to the Lord Chancellor (Thurwell), a Preface, and a Letter to Dr. Priestley* (London, 1790).

<sup>9</sup> Priestley *Defences of Unitarianism for the Years 1788 & 1789* (Birmingham, 1790).

opportunity. I want the opinion on Dr Horsl[e]y's Newton,<sup>10</sup> about which I wrote to D<sup>r</sup> Price,<sup>11</sup> but have had no answer.

Mr Russell<sup>12</sup> would send you my Sermon.<sup>13</sup> I hope you will find it plain, and not violent. Mr Heywood<sup>14</sup> has sent us a most excellent pamphlet,<sup>15</sup> which must by all means be published, but will not be proper to be done here, as it will be [ascr]ibed to me, and will be considered as persona[l] with respect to Mr Pitt.<sup>16</sup>

I sent you two copies of the History,<sup>17</sup> that you might send one to D<sup>r</sup> Heberden,<sup>18</sup> or any other friend. I am glad that you and he like it. It will encourage me to proceed, tho I shall suspend a year at the least.

My wife will stay longer here on account of the child being inoculated ~~2~~ two days ago. All are very well, and desire to be remembered to you both. Yours & M<sup>rs</sup> Lindsey's most affectionately

J Priestley

P.S. If Mr Russell send copies of my Sermon enow, send in my name to M<sup>rs</sup> Rayner,<sup>19</sup> Mr Dodson,<sup>20</sup> D<sup>r</sup> Price, D<sup>r</sup> Kippis,<sup>21</sup> Mr Belsham,<sup>22</sup> //Mr Salte<sup>23</sup> Mr Radcliffe<sup>24</sup>// and my friends in general. If enow be not had at first you will soon have more.

<sup>10</sup> Samuel Horsley, *Isaaci Newtoni Opera quæ exstant Omnia*, 5 vols. (London, 1779-85).

<sup>11</sup> Richard Price (1723-1791), see 18 Dec 1769.

<sup>12</sup> William Russell (1740-1818), see 5 Jul 1786.

<sup>13</sup> ? Priestley, *The Conduct to be observed by Dissenters in order to procure the Repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts, recommended in a Sermon, preached before the Congregations of the Old and New Meetings, at Birmingham, November 5, 1789* (Birmingham, 1789).

<sup>14</sup> Samuel Heywood (1753-1828), see 21 Oct 1789.

<sup>15</sup> ? *The Right of Protestant Dissenters to a Compleat Toleration, Asserted* (London, 1787), reissued in 1789 and 1790 with various postscripts.

<sup>16</sup> William Pitt (1759-1806), see 14 Jul 1787.

<sup>17</sup> ? Priestley, *A General History of the Christian Church, to the Fall of the Western Empire*, 2 vols. (Birmingham, 1790).

<sup>18</sup> William Heberden (1710-1801), see 9 Mar 1789.

<sup>19</sup> Elizabeth Rayner (d. 1800), see 17 May 1786.

<sup>20</sup> Michael Dodson (1732-1799), see 27 Nov 1787.

<sup>21</sup> Andrew Kippis (1725-1795), see 17 Feb 1771.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas Belsham (1750-1829), see 3 Apr 03 1789.

<sup>23</sup> Samuel Salte (d. 1817) [Rutt, I, i, 215].

<sup>24</sup> Ebenezer Radcliffe (1732-1809) [Rutt, I, i, 215; *Mon. Rep.*, IV (1809), 707-711].