

67 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 22 March 1790

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 136-137

PRINTED: Rutt, I, ii, pp. 60-61

ADDRESS: The Rev^d Mr Lindsey Essex Street London

POSTMARK: Birmingham, Mar 24 1790

ENDORSEMENT: March 22 1790

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Dear friend

We have seen nothing of Mr Walker¹ on his return to Nottingham, and how the Address to the Nation is to be managed, I know not. I do not wish to be responsible for any thing of the kind – I certainly shall do no such thing as Mr Stone² advises. It would in every view ~~to~~ //be// be wrong. I had much rather write a second letter to Mr Pitt,³ but I do not mean to do even that, but confine myself to the Familiar Letters⁴ I am now in the course of writing and publishing here. M^r Madan⁵ has advertised a Letter to me,⁶ in reply to them against thursday next, and on that day my third set of Letters⁷ are also to be out. I shall certainly send you or Mr Johnson⁸ a parcel by that night's coach, and a copy of Mr Madan's Letter. Mr Burn⁹ has threatened me with the spiritual court for defamation but I fancy he will be better advized than to carry his threats into execution. The controversy is a good ~~to~~ deal attended to, and so far operates to my advantage. But Mr Madan was most highly respected, and has many friends.

I sent Mr Johnson a short Letter for the St James' Chronicle, requesting the insertion of my Letter to the Members of Parliament, and desired him to apply to you for a copy of it. I fancy, by a letter that I received yesterday, that it has found its way into some other evening Paper.

Mr Cooper¹⁰ has a curious story to tell of Samuel Fletcher.¹¹ He can neither write nor read, and some High Churchmen, making him drunk, got his consent to the letter that Mr Burke¹² flourished ~~away~~ away upon.¹³ I doubt not he will get a correct account of the fact, and publish it.

It will hardly be in my power to be with you till the 13 of April, on account of finishing the printing of my Philosophical Work,¹⁴ and beginning the printing of the

¹ George Walker (1734-1803), see 20 Mar 1787.

² ? John Hurford Stone (1763-1818), radical and printer [ODNB].

³ Priestley had written *A Letter to the Right Honourable William Pitt* in 1787, but did not write another.

⁴ Priestley, *Familiar Letters, addressed to the Inhabitants of Birmingham* (Birmingham, 1790), see 11 Mar 1790.

⁵ Spencer Madan (1758-1836), see 4 Dec 1789.

⁶ Spencer Madan, *A Letter to Doctor Priestley, in consequence of his "Familiar Letters addressed to the Inhabitants of the Town of Birmingham, &c."* (Birmingham, 1790).

⁷ Priestley, *Familiar Letters, addressed to the Inhabitants of Birmingham. Part III* (Birmingham, 1790).

⁸ Joseph Johnson (1738-1809), see 18 Jan 1770.

⁹ Edward Burn (1762-1837), see 11 Mar 1790.

¹⁰ Thomas Cooper (1859-1839), 12 Mar 1790.

¹¹ Samuel Fletcher, member of a meeting of dissenting ministers held at Boston in Lincolnshire.

¹² Edmund Burke (1729/30-1797), see 11 Mar 1790.

¹³ For an account of the debate, which occurred on 2 March 1790, see *Gent. Mag.*, LX (1790), 425.

¹⁴ Joseph Priestley, *Experiments and Observations on Different Kinds of Air, and other Branches of Natural Philosophy, connected with the Subject*, 3 vols. (Birmingham, 1790).

Hymns¹⁵ for our own use. They go to the press this week, and I wish to see some good progress made in the printing before I go. Perhaps we may finish them on the 14th therefore at [farthes]t I hope to have the pleasure of dining with M^{rs} Rayner¹⁶ as usual. [Please] to give my best respects to her, and those of [my w]ife.

Mr Russell¹⁷ is uncommonly struck with Mr Wakefield,¹⁸ and as Mr Walker and D^r Clayton¹⁹ strongly recommended a proposal of his, which was to translate the New Testament in two years, provided he had 100£ each year, Mr Russell undertook it, and has remitted him part of the money. I have subscribed my guinea a year. Mr Walker, did sound him ~~about~~, indirectly, about joining us but found him utterly averse to it. Besides it was settled with Mr Frend²⁰ that we could not take him in.

I am yours & M^{rs} Lindsey's
most affectionately
J Priestley.
My wife desires her best respects.

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

¹⁶ Elizabeth Rayner (d. 1800), see 17 May 1786.

¹⁷ William Russell (1740-1818), see 5 Jul 1786.

¹⁸ Gilbert Wakefield (1756-1841), see 3 Apr 1789.

¹⁹ Nicholas Clayton (1730-1797), Unitarian minister [ODNB].

²⁰ William Frend (1757-1841), see 4 May 1789.