

72 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 24 May 1790

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 146-147

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

ENDORSEMENT: May. 24. 1790.

Birm. May 24 1790

Dear friend

I thank you for all the pains you have taken with my several commissions, which have been more than ever troublesome. I am glad that D<sup>r</sup> Bancroft's Letter<sup>1</sup> will be inserted in the next Gentleman's Magazine, and that my investigation of this calumny, to which I was much averse, will appear justifiable, and even necessary, in the opinion of my best friends. I shall do it effectually in one of //my// Familiar Letters,<sup>2</sup> which I am this day sending to the press. But this last Part being larger than any of the rest, will hardly be printed off before the middle of the next week, especially as I must attend Dudley Lectures, and thence go to Heath tomorrow. Two Miss Percivals<sup>3</sup> are with us, and they are just set out, with my wife, Joseph,<sup>4</sup> and Mr Chambers,<sup>5</sup> to see Warwick, and are to return tomorrow evening.

I greatly admire Mr Turner's<sup>6</sup> spirit and zeal, but I cannot of his plan. Neither X<sup>ty</sup>, nor the reformation, was carried on in that way, but more silently and naturally, like the growth of corn, to which our Saviour compared the former. So ostentatious a method of proceeding would engage our opponents in similar measures, and excite a spirit of party, which is hostile to free inquiry[.] Besides, the relief of sufferers, publicly held out, would draw endless claimants, to whom no satisfaction could be given. Assistance in particular and well known cases may still be given, books may be distributed, and lay preache[rs] who want but little money, may be encouraged, without making much noise. The very apparatus and correspondence, necessary for such a scheme as Mr Turner's would alone be very expensive, and the same money may be much better employed.

I have received the Bp of Llandaff's Tract<sup>7</sup> and as I have dropped much of my scheme<sup>8</sup> I want no more books. Now, however, I think is the time to exhibit to public view all the defects of the church establishment, without sparing, but without malignity, and some other I hope will do it. I only dwell on the situation of the officiating clergy in my Letters, this being necessary to my Plan.

I thank you for your attendance on Mr Duncombe,<sup>9</sup> and beg you would make my acknowledgements for his assistance in carrying on my exp<sup>ts</sup>.

I inclose this in a Letter to Mr Lee.<sup>10</sup>

Yours & M<sup>rs</sup> Lindsey's

<sup>1</sup> Edward Bancroft (1744-1821), see 13 May 1790; *Gent. Mag.*, LX (1790), 384-386.

<sup>2</sup> Priestley, *Familiar Letters, addressed to the Inhabitants of Birmingham* (Birmingham, 1790).

<sup>3</sup> ? Daughters of Thomas Percival (1740-1804).

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Priestley jnr. (1768-1863), see 12 Oct 1789.

<sup>5</sup> ? William Cecil Chambers (1768?-1817?), see 14 May 1790.

<sup>6</sup> William Turner (1761-1859), Unitarian minister [ODNB].

<sup>7</sup> Richard Watson, *A Letter to his Grace, &c.* (London, 1783). See 13 May 1790.

<sup>8</sup> For a *Letter to the Bishops*, see 29 Oct 1789.

<sup>9</sup> Henry Duncombe (1728-1818), M.P. for Yorkshire (1780-96).

<sup>10</sup> John Lee (1733-1793), see Mar 1770.

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most affectionately

J Priestley

I wish you would inform Mr Johnson<sup>11</sup> that no Analytical Review was sent for me the last month.

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<sup>11</sup> Joseph Johnson (1738-1809), see 18 Jan 1770.