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ENDORSEMENT: D^r P. June 29: 1791

Birm. June 29. 1791.

Dear friend

I am perfectly satisfied with your suppressing my letter to L^d L,¹ and shall not at present think of any Address to the Bishops.² I inclose two letters relating a Mr Nile³ of Uttoxeter, that you may consider of the case, and speak to Mr Belsham⁴ about it. The letters of his that I have by me shew that he is what his friends describe him to be. If he can be educated for the ministry, I apprehend that Hackney will be too expensive for him, even on the foundation, and that Coward's fund will be preferable.⁵

I also inclose a copy of my Political tract,⁶ which will not be printed off till I hear from you. We propose that it shall be issued here as a tract recommended to us from Manchester, tho there is nothing in it that is at all objectionable, being the calmest discussion of important subjects.

We are forming a Constitutional Society here, similar to that in Manchester, and I inclose the Rules and Principles of it. We propose to have two annual dinners, viz the 14 of July and 4 Nov^{br}.⁷

I also inclose a letter from D^r Disney,⁸ which I do not see how I can avoid answering without being guilty of gross incivility, which I ~~own~~ //own// will be very painful to me, and I do not foresee any inconvenience, but rather advantage, to yourself, ~~and~~ //or// D^r Blackburne,⁹ from such a correspondence as this. It appears to me that I might just as well refuse to answer him, if he spoke to me. However, I shall wait till I hear from you.

Our anxiety during the king of France's escape, and our joy on his capture, cannot be described.¹⁰ I hope the new constitution is now effectually established, and that all attempts to overturn it will be in vain. The high party ~~here~~ //here// are mortified in the extreme. They would have ha[d] France involved in a most ruinous civil war, for the imaginary rights of one man. A majority, I fear, of Englishmen are in these sentiments; so that we are far indeed behind the French. In spite of all we can write, or do, an attachment to high maxims of governm^t gains ground here, and the love of liberty is on the decline. Such is the influence of the Court. Nothing but Public difficulties will open our eyes.

¹ ? William Petty [formerly Fitzmaurice], second earl of Shelburne and first marquess of Lansdowne (1737-1805) (Lord Lansdowne), see Jun or Jul 1772.

² See 29 Oct 1789.

³ unidentified.

⁴ Thomas Belsham (1750-1829), see 3 Apr 1789.

⁵ The preceding three paragraphs are omitted from Rutt's edition.

⁶ ? *Political Dialogues. Number I. On the General Principles of Government* (London: J. Johnson, 1791).

⁷ To commemorate, respectively, the storming of the Bastille in 1789 and the landing of William III in 1688.

⁸ John Disney (1746-1816), see 11 Jun 1787.

⁹ William Blackburne, son of Francis Blackburne (1705-1787), see 4 May 1789.

¹⁰ Louis XVI and the royal family had fled to Tuileries on the night of June 20 1791. The next day the king was recognised and arrested at Varennes and was paraded back to Paris under guard.

I rejoice in the prospect of seeing you and M^{rs} Lindsey this summer. I really should not know how to do without it. While Mr Tayleur¹¹ lives, at least, let us never neglect to see him annually His time, and indeed ours, cannot be long. Let us often meet, and encourage one another. The enemy is powerful, tho we must not despair.

I am glad to find that Mr Belsham does not despair of the College. I hope he has sufficient ground for his hopes. I hope they will not invite Mr Porson.¹² They will not want him, and I am persuaded will repent of the measure.¹³

I hope the Preamble¹⁴ will now stand. It would be better to omit it intirely, than alter it, any more. When shall we see what Mr Belsham wrote to add to it?

I do not think that I shall go any whither this summer. I have much to do, and have no excuse, I thank God, on the score of bad health.

Yours & M^{rs} Lindsey's most affectionately

J Priestley

My wife is returned and joins in respects to you.

¹¹ William Tayleur (1713-1796), see 20 March 1787.

¹² Richard Porson (1759-1808), see 16 Jul 1790.

¹³ This paragraph is omitted from Rutt's edition.

¹⁴ See Unitarian Society for promoting Christian Knowledge and the Practice of Virtue, *Unitarian Society* (London, 1791?).