

61 To THEOPHILUS LINDSEY, 26 January 1790

MS: Dr. Williams's Library, MS. 12.12, f. 125-126<sup>1</sup>  
ADDRESS: The Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr Lindsey Essex Street London

Birm. Jan 26 1790 [Jan 26.1790]

Dear Sir

I must trouble you with two more presents //of the Defences<sup>2</sup>// to Mr Holmes of Scorten,<sup>3</sup> and Mr Philipps<sup>4</sup> according to the letter inclosed. Mr Johnson<sup>5</sup> may send it to his son at Defs[?], as he probably supplies him with books for his school.

You will find by my last that your kind interference to prevent dissention was unnecessary. At the same time I can assure you that many Dissenters in the country are far from being satisfied with the conduct of the London Committee, and the wisdom of their conduct is much arraigned, as well as their assuming to act for the whole body, when they knew that body was ready to act for themselves. Many think the bringing //the// motion forward in the last year of a session to be wrong, as looks like a readiness to take an unfair advantage, ~~to~~ whereas we wish to act, and to app[ear] to act, in the most open manner. It is plainly seen that the union of all the Dissenters of all denominations throughout the kingdom, the greatest event that has taken place in their history, and which cannot but have happy effects, is viewed with jealousy and dislike by the London Committee. ~~It~~ //This// is thought to betray a narrow mind, unworthy of persons intrusted to act for the great body ~~to~~ ~~they~~ of which they would be the head. I hope that for the future they will be more cautious, and know their place.

In less than a week the History<sup>6</sup> will be in London. As it is bulky, I shall send no copies to you in particular, but wish you would take the care of 25, to be disposed of as we think proper.

I had sent 50 Copies of Defences to Oxford but you will see our bookseller<sup>7</sup> is ~~to~~ //broke//, and no body will sell them. I shall soon order them to London.

If there be any thing in the anonymous [le]tter I inclose, perhaps you will know it.

The 4 vols at Garton[?] are, I perceive, part [of] the set Mr Berington<sup>8</sup> described. He thought that the 4 might be an abridgm<sup>t</sup> of the 8. The 4<sup>to</sup> set at Elmsley's<sup>9</sup> is probably that abridgement. If you go by, I wish you would look at it, if it be not gone. I mean not to go to a very great price.

I shall be glad to see the two letters you mention, and am yours & M<sup>rs</sup> Lindsey's most affectionately

J Priestley

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<sup>1</sup> The letter is not printed in Rutt's edition, with the exception of the fourth paragraph beginning 'I had sent 50 copies of the Defences to Oxford' which is added as a postscript to the previous letter (22 Jan 1790).

<sup>2</sup> Priestley, *Defences of Unitarianism for the Years 1788 & 1789* (Birmingham, 1790).

<sup>3</sup> Revd Edward Holmes (1737/8-1799), master of Scorten school, author of *A Comment on the Apostles' Creed, for the use of Unlearned Christians* (Newcastle, 1788), *An Attempt to prove the Materiality of the Soul* (Newcastle, 1789).

<sup>4</sup> ? John George Phillips, M. P. for Carmarthen.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Johnson (1738-1809), see 18 Dec 1769.

<sup>6</sup> Priestley, *A General History of the Christian Church, to the Fall of the Western Empire*, 2 vols. (Birmingham, 1790).

<sup>7</sup> Henry Hinton (1749-1816), see 22 Jan 1790.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph Berington (1743-1827), see 29 Jun 1788.

<sup>9</sup> Peter Elmsley (1735/6-1802), bookseller operating from premises at 87 Strand [ODNB].