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**Title:** Letter from Joseph Priestley to John Seddon

**Date:** April 9, 1762

**Location:** I-BeachW-1966-1

## **Contact:**

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O Dear Sir communication of your proceedings. I hope that, if you have a fair hearing , the representation you will able to make of our expertations here are not very sanguine. Prejudices, and particularly unfactourable and unjust prejudices, such as people are ashamed to have contracted, me not easily conquered. Though great is the power of touth. By all me and give us the earliest information of every step you take of importance We cannot help leving a little anxious about the sucufig your negotiations ( very body how has heard of your invitation to Limport poor M' aitain I have just been with him) is greatly alarmed at it. To speak the truth I am not without apprehensions myself, the I excleavour to heep up his spirits. but I am certain you will not determine rashly in so critical on affair. We are much at a lof about our Ohemical lecture five of our younger students are not permitted to attend it, on all have not the names of any of the subscribers out of the deadony. When you write, do not forget to mention them! You will ollige me if you will take the trouble to prouve for my friend the vicas the glasses the mentions in the letter which to provent transcribing I in close you. Could you not engage ATT Canton to examine them, as you will so it requires a good deal of exactness. you will easily get a punk in Lordon to neturn I am very angry with M Fleming. Let me know whether you think it will do us any harm

You may let me know what M Hippis says about the Dany; but I shall hordly listen to any scheme of publication Indeed, M' Idden it is too great a risque for a passon in my incumstances, and with my vices to run. I have known the time when no bady was a more fearles freethinker than myself; but tempore men tanten et nes mutamer in Mis. Conte I ford it, I should not be were to printing it, and longing it in the hounds of a few friends; but Byon know I can do no such thing). I bog you would discharge my account of bethe with m Griffisho. After I had written the alove, which was late last night, I received your second letter this morning, what I have done the in Los will show, it was all I have Merch ted yet. When the receipt of your, I invited all the students in Sivinity to drink a dish of ten with me, and in the mean time drew up The report, and got m Ihretheld to transcribe it. it was signed with all the readinite and chearfulness in the world, with the most cordial wisher, that it or any thing else they could do might have a good effect. Mr Thretheld read it districtly and Mr Palmer took it into his hand, and permed it a considerable time, with great attention, and signed it when I came to his turn without the least hesitation. I talked to them above an hour upon the state of the deadeny, going over every particular, I enquired into all the dikin lettere and M Malmer was generally the first to exhap his pleasure and vatisfaction is them. I desired they would without all fedom mention, now, at all any time, any disertions they had to any

thing respecting the conduct of the a cad enny, apareng them it would be heard with the most favourable attention, for that we were extremely descious to give them all the adoantage and vatisfaction that it was popule they could have in their such a situation, they said they were being far from having any objection to make. I asked her particularly if here was any appearance of your ever interfering in an undre mænner it the monager ment of the hiderny, or that wife our having any connaction with the where of himpert liturgy, a in any nespects endeavourd to lay any bias upon their minis, a had any other view last their insporarement, with a great deal to that and The like purposes; they said by no me and. Mothing could have given me greater satisfaction than their whole whale whaveour I will talk to Mr Palmer more closely after a few days. There not followed your direction is outly, to have exigled him out at fait, I thength amight have alarmed him, and given him suspicions of my intelligence; and then I should not have been all to procure even thus much. I can better remen , trate against his condent a little time hence, as is consistent with their panh de claration. I shall probably wait till I hear from yen agani before I perceid any further. This wiring, likewise, Phil Taylor communicated to me his fathers intertion fremoving him to Easter, and stared me his letters. We both shed to see , I could not help it. He is leaving as presently your letter came when I was at M Helt at brakfact m athin come soon heard of it, and come, and at some time with me I mentioned no particulars. You had not need to car teen me I durit not tel him. I would offert him the much; The desires

you would enquire whether D' Doddied, it letters were printing By the way When I men troud My lithing, interteen of man reading of Toold rigin I winite bestiever, Mr Palmer replied of man glad of have to amounted them I should be sorry to be estigled to transmission now. " Them again!

M' Holt Jyour runewhen mentioned a Solar Microscope

Swisty on could meet with Banier's my Mology week hand We are infinitely obliged to you for the generaus rain you take to serve as. We will do our duty here, and Let not your noble courage be cant down Mour, and Mr Scakens, with reciprocal warms Joseph Prinkey. all aur compliments and good wither await you Marriegten an! 9th 762

## JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, 1733 - 1804 to JOHN SEDDON, 1725 - 1770

Dear Sir

I am very much obliged to you for your friendly communication of your proceedings. I hope that, if you have a fair hearing, the representation you will /be/ able to make of our affairs will not be without some good effect: however our expectations here are not very sanguine. Prejudices, and particularly unfavourable and unjust prejudices, such as people are ashamed to have contracted, are not easily conquered, though great is the power of truth. By all means give us the earliest information of every step you take of importance. We cannot help being a little anxious about the success of your negotiations.

Everybody here has heard of your invitation to <u>Liverpool</u>. Poor Mr. Aikin (I have just been with him) is greatly alarmed at it. To speak the truth I am not without apprehensions myself, tho' I endeavor to keep up his spirits. But I am certain you will not determine rashly in so critical an affair.

We are much at a loss about our <u>Chemical lecture</u>: five of our younger students are not permitted to attend it, and I have not the names of any of the subscribers out of the Academy. When you write, do not forget to mention them.

You will oblige me if you will take the trouble to procure for my friend the Vicar the glasses he mentions in the letter which (to save transcribing) I enclose you. Could you not engage Mr. Canton to examine them, as you will see it requires a good deal of exactness. You will easily get a frank in London to return it me in.

I am very angry at  $\underline{\text{Mr. Fleming.}}$  Let me know whether you think it will do us any harm.

You may let me know what Mr. Kippis says about Mr. Paul; but I shall hardly listen to any scheme of publication. Indeed, Mr. Seddon, it is too great a risque for a person in my circumstances, and with my vision to run. I have known the time when nobody was a more fearless freethinker than myself; but tempore mutantur et nos mutamen in illis. Could I afford it, I should not be averse to printing it, and lodging it in the hands of a few friends; but you know I can do no such thing.

I beg you would discharge my account of books with Mr. Griffiths.

After I had written all the above, which was late last night, I received your second letter this morning. What I have done the enclosed will show, it was all I have attempted yet. Upon the receipt of yours, I invited all the students in Divinity to drink a dish of tea with me, and in the meantime drew up the report, and got Mr. Threlkeld to transcribe it. It was signed with all the readiness and cheerfulness in the world, with the most cordial wishes, that it or anything else they could do, might have a good effect. Mr. Threlkeld read it distinctly and Mr. Palmer took it into his hand, and perused it a considerable time, with great attention, and signed it when it came to his turn without the least hesitation. I talked to them above an hour on the state of the Academy, going over every particular; I enquired into all Mr. Aiken's lectures and Mr. Palmer was generally the first to express his pleasure and satisfaction in them. I desired they would with all freedom mention, now, or at any time, any objections they had to anything respecting the conduct of the Academy, assuring them it would be heard with the most favourable attention, for that we were extremely desirous to give them all the advantage and satisfaction that it was possible they could have in such a situation. They said they were very far from having any objection to make. I asked them particularly if there was any appearance of your ever interfering in an undue manner in the management of the Academy, or if our having a connection with the scheme of Liverpool liturgy, or in any respect endeavoured to lay any bias upon their minds, or had any other view but their improvement, with a great deal to that and the like purposes, they said by no means. Nothing could have given me greater satisfaction that their whole behaviour.

I will talk to Mr. Palmer more closely after a few days. I have not followed your directions exactly, to have singled him and at first, I thought might have alarmed him, and given him suspicions of my intelligence; and then I should not have been able to procure even thus much. I can better remonstrate against his conduct a little time hence, as inconsistent with frank declaration. I shall probably wait until I hear from you again before I proceed any further.

This evening, likewise, <u>Phil Taylor</u>, communicated to me his father's intentions of removing him to <u>Exeter</u>, and showed me his letters. We both shed tears, I could not help it. He is leaving us presently.

Your letter came when I was at Mr. Holt's at breakfast. Mr. Aikin soon heard of it, and came, and sat some time with me. I mentioned no particulars. You had not need to caution me. I dare not tell him, it would affect him too much. He desires you would enquire whether Dr. Doddridge's lectures were printings.

By the way when I mentioned Mr. Aikin's intention of reading Dr. Doddridge's Divinity Lectures, printed or not printed, Mr. Palmer replied, "I am glad I have transcribed them. I should be sorry to be obliged to transcribe them now."

Mr. Holt if you remember mentioned a solar microscope.

I wish you could meet with Banier's Mythology second hand.

We are infinitely obliged to you for the generous pain you take to serve us. We will do our duty here, and

Let not your noble courage be cast down.

Yours, and Mrs. Seddons, with reciprocal warmth,

Joseph Priestley

All our compliments and good wishes await you

Warrington Apl. 9th 1762