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Title: Letter from Joseph Priestley to the Duke of Northumberland

Date: circa 1767

Location: MC 1998.1, B1, F11

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Dr Priestley, having written the History and present state of Electricity, would willingly undertake to write the history of all the other branches of experimental philosophy upon the same extensive plan. He apprehends that a work of this kind, exhibiting a view of all that has been done already, would, on several accounts, greatly facilitate future discoveries in science; but he has hitherto been discouraged from undertaking it by the expences in which it would necessarily involve him, and which he is not able to supply; particularly in procuring the books to which he cannot have access in his present situation. In order to execute this work with advantage, he will also be under an immediate necessity of considerably enlarging his philosophical apparatus, both to ascertain many disputed facts, and to pursue the hints for farther discoveries, which the consideration of those that have been made by others will unavoidably suggest. His history of electricity, was very expensive to him on this account, but he thinks himself well repaid by the many original experiments he was thereby enabled to make, most of which are now before the public.

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