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A Baptist Generation Gap

APOCALYPTIC EUROPE

Inquiring visitors to Ickworth House, the magnificent National Trust mansion near Bury St Edmunds, will learn that its unusual shape - a large central rotunda from which branch out two curving corridors, each terminating in a wing - was dictated by its designer's desire to live in the rotunda and display his art treasures in the galleries formed by the corridors and wings. He was Frederick Augustus Hervey, fourth Earl of Bristol and the Bishop of Derry. Unconventional (who else would award benefices to the winners of a curates' race along the sands?), popular with both Irish Romanists and Presbyterians, admired as a continental traveller (think of those Hotels Bristol named in his honour), immensely opulent, superbly tasteful, he was one of the eminent persons captured in 1798 when a French Revolutionary army occupied Rome. Though freed, he lost £20,000 worth of treasures he had collected.¹ Another, even more eminent, person taken was the aged and troubled Pope Pius VI. He, dragged from place to place in Italy and then over the Alps to France, lost his life, dying at Valence the next year. An army's seizure of the Pope would be astonishing news even today, but in 1798 many people saw it as literally apocalyptic, and with good reason.

For the Pope's seizure was part of the extraordinary series of events seen since 1789, a series comparable in magnitude with the Reformation and having a conspicuous religious dimension. France, the Roman Catholic superpower, persecutor of Protestants and a threat to Protestant Britain, had been overtaken by revolution. The revolutionaries had essentially superseded their monarchy, proceeded to put king and queen to death, laid hands on ecclesiastical property, virtually nationalized the clergy, and adopted (at least for a space) the formal worship of Reason. Their armies had swept over France's borders, invading Italy and even the Ottoman domains of Egypt and Palestine. Surely such astounding happenings must have some great and profound religious meaning? An explanation - or rather, as we shall see, competing explanations - emerged from a particular line of Georgian theological scholarship.

A GEORGIAN TRADITION

This was the line concerned with 'the prophecies', studying mainly the Book of Daniel, the eschatological discourse credited to Jesus (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21), II Thessalonians 2.1-10, and the Book of Revelation. The sophisticated discussion of such texts, on the pre-critical assumption that they provided detailed guides to the events of the centuries that were to follow, if only one could correctly interpret them, was an eighteenth-century intellectual tradition. To be sure, there were scoffers and sceptics, and also religious persons who shied away from what they feared was too speculative a study, but a numerous succession of able writers,

Churchmen and Dissenters, continually sought in these biblical texts the theological explanation (that is, the *real* explanation) of what had happened in history and of what was currently happening. Some of them, cautiously or otherwise, suggested, on the basis of 'the prophecies', what was likely to happen in the future. All this industry has left a massive literary deposit - in contemporary Bible commentaries, expositions, monographs, sermons, tracts, histories, periodical pieces, and letters.

The effective model for most of these studies was the scholarly production of the Cambridge don and polymath, Joseph Mede (properly 'Mead')(1586-1638). He had taken up a roughly-hewn exegetical scheme that had come down from the Middle Ages and been worked at during the Reformation, and had made it into a most impressive theological construction, so influential that it has to be called a paradigm. Mede identified Antichrist as the Papacy, and, making use of the principle put into circulation by Joachim of Fiore that a biblical day could be read as a year, he calculated that Antichrist's dominance, the starting-date of which he could not be sure, would last for 1260 years. For example, the forty-two months' exercise of authority by the blasphemous beast from the sea (Revelation 13.1), the secular arm of the two-horned beast (13.11) symbolizing the pontiff and his clergy, is a period identical to and concurrent with the forty-two months that Gentiles would tread the holy city underfoot (11.2), the 1260 days that the witnesses would prophesy (11.3), and the three and a half years that the woman would spend in the wilderness (12.14).

A divine clock, one might therefore say, had been ticking away for centuries, indicating, for the Median initiate, the fulfilment of prophecy after prophecy. In Mede's own view, the first six seals of Revelation were past: they had ended with the overthrow of paganism in the Roman Empire. So were the first six trumpets: they had announced such dire events as the arrival of Alaric the Goth and the downfall of Constantinople. And again, the first three vials had been poured out: they included pre-Reformation and Protestant attacks on the Papacy. The clock was still ticking, and would stop only with the Papacy's destruction and supersession by the Kingdom of God.²

Admittedly, Mede's paradigm had suffered in the Established Church's esteem because his illegitimate legatees among the Puritans had slapped the label 'Antichrist' on that Church itself, let alone on many other things. Nevertheless, it survived, attracting considered and deferential revisions (as from Sir Isaac Newton and William Whiston), and appearing in standard commentaries - in the Matthew Henry *Exposition of the Old and New Testament* (1707-21); in William Lowth's *Commentary upon the Larger and Lesser Prophets* (1714-25), which was frequently reprinted as a continuation of Bishop Simon Patrick's ten-volume Old Testament paraphrase and commentary from Genesis to the Song of Solomon; in Moses Lowman's *Paraphrase and Notes on the Revelation of St John* (1737); in Philip Doddridge's *Family Expositor* (1739-56); and, with particular vehemence, in John Gill's *Expositions of the Old and New Testaments* (1748-66). The paradigm's anti-

papalism was, of course, meat and drink to people understandably alarmed by the Romanizing activities of James II, by the Stuart Pretenders, by the aggression and intolerance of Louis XIV. Furthermore, the paradigm had an apologetic potential. In deft hands it proved exceedingly useful against deistic and sceptical attacks on special revelation. The most eloquent and popular Georgian version of the paradigm, Bishop Thomas Newton's *Dissertations on the Prophecies, which have Remarkably been Fulfilled, and at this Time are Fulfilling in the World* (1754-8), was written as Christian apologetic. It resulted from a significant conversation between Newton and Field Marshal George Wade. Wade, so Newton reported, 'had no great regard for revealed religion or the clergy', but admitted that if, indeed, prophecies uttered long before the event were even now being fulfilled, one would have to concede that revelation must be true.³ The *Dissertations*, designedly interesting to read, went through numerous editions. The force of Newton's work also brought about an attempt to institutionalize this useful paradigm. His friend, William Warburton, from 1759 Bishop of Gloucester, a veteran anti-papalist who apprehended Rome as a vast, organized, cunning, persecuting apostasy and as the consort of tyranny, had long been aware of the paradigm's apologetic potential. The *Dissertations* delighted him, and in 1768 he founded the Warburtonian Lectures, intended to 'prove the truth of revealed Religion in general, and of the Christian in particular, from the completion of the prophecies in the Old and New Testament, which relate to the Christian church, especially to the apostacy of Papal Rome.'⁴ All the lectures were ordered to be printed and published.⁵ Appointment as Warburtonian Lecturer did not, to say the least, impede preferment in the Church of England. The initial lecturer, Richard Hurd, whose course, given before crowded congregations, was published in 1772, was in 1775 consecrated as Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry; in 1781 he was translated to Worcester; two years later he declined the primacy. Samuel Hallifax, the second Lecturer, became a chaplain in ordinary to the King while still engaged in his course, and in 1781 was consecrated Bishop of Gloucester, being translated in 1789 to St Asaph. He was succeeded as Lecturer by Lewis Bagot, who was installed as Dean of Christ Church in 1777 - again while still the Lecturer - and followed Thomas Newton as Bishop of Bristol in 1782, with subsequent translations to Norwich and St Asaph.

Really, the Median paradigm was hardly less than a great myth, a sustaining *Weltanschauung* for Protestantism. Not only did it appear so satisfactory academically, covering numerous pieces of evidence inside and outside the Bible, and particularly from history with the strongest emotional associations ('the blood of the saints'); not only, as we have just seen, did it help to answer the cultured despisers of biblical revelation; it also offered vast hope. What if, in his last days, the Beast should convulse furiously and destructively? He was doomed, and his doom was near. Darkness lay ahead, but after it would come immense light.

There had been occasional prognostications from students of 'the prophecies' that a political disaster would befall Bourbon France.⁶ Then in 1789 the Revolution had

begun. The great Romanist nation was startlingly transformed. Then Italy was invaded. Perhaps even now the Papacy was being extinguished. Perhaps the 1260 years had run out in 1789, having started with the publication of Justinian's Code in 529. Perhaps the restoration of Israel was at hand. Perhaps, amid international catastrophe, the inauguration of the millennium was approaching. But - Britain was fighting Revolutionary France! Was this not something like impiety? For France, surely, was the divinely-appointed agent in destroying the papal empire, just as Cyrus of Persia had been acting for God when he overthrew the empire of the Babylonians, thereby bringing about the Return of the Jews from Exile. This was how Bicheno and other left-wing exegetes were thinking.

JAMES BICHENO (1752-1831)

Bicheno was the minister of the Baptist church at Newbury, Berkshire, where he was also a schoolmaster. He was earnest, didactic, repetitious, yet courageous, able to point out an embarrassing situation, as he does in the Address to the Reader in the third edition (1799) of his *Signs of the Times*, writing on the last day of 1798:

It is to be lamented that, though . . . hundreds of volumes have been written, and thousands of sermons preached, concerning the enormities of *Babylon the great*; about the predicted fall of Rome, and of the tyrannical Roman church; . . . yet, now, when the papal government is overturned, proud Rome revolutionized . . . not a word is to be heard, that may lead us to suspect that these things at all indicate the accomplishment of those predictions . . . Kingdom after kingdom falls; and the papal government itself is annihilated; and scarcely any sensation is produced, unless of regret, and of indignation against the instruments whom God sees fit to employ. It is next to treason to talk of Antichrist, and to ascribe those calamities which now desolate the earth to the retributive justice of God.⁷

What, Bicheno asks in particular, has happened to that expert in the study of the prophecies, Bishop Hurd, now so silent? Worse than such silences, there is even abroad at this time a deplorable tendency, animadversions on which conclude Bicheno's treatise, to seek a *rapprochement* with Rome.

Signs of the Times is a Leftish Dissenter's Medism. Thus, concerning the two-horned beast (Revelation 13.11), Bicheno asks whether it is not 'Lewis XIV or at least that tyranny which the family of the *Capets* have exercised, to the great oppression of the Christian church, and to the destruction of mankind?'⁸ Showing his hand more obviously, he describes the two witnesses (Revelation 11) as not only collective witnesses for 'gospel truth', but also for 'civil liberty',⁹ proposing to include in that succession those whom he calls the Hampdens, the Sidneys, the Lockes, and the Hoadlys. The French Revolution marks their 'resurrection' and it closes the 1260 year period, which began in 529. 'The probability is that the seventh trumpet [Revelation 11.15] sounded in the autumn of *ninety-two*, when the Duke of Brunswick invaded France. And if so, it follows that the first angel then

began to pour out his vial of wrath *upon the earth*, as a libation to divine justice.¹⁰ Other vials have doubtless followed. The second began to be poured out, on islands and maritime lands, in 1793, 'when the maritime countries joined the Antichristian tyrants in their crusade against the liberties of France.'¹¹ The fact that 'the Pope and his college of cardinals are become wandering mendicants'¹² may imply the process of emptying the fifth. Under the sixth, the Ottoman Empire will be shaken. Hesitantly, Bicheno suggests in an appendix of 1799 that the French campaign in Egypt may be the start of this sixth outpouring. He adds, 'Whether the present extraordinary expedition of the French in the east is immediately connected with the future restoration of the Jews, God only knows; but it is highly probable that it is.'¹³

Bicheno took up this theme of Jewish restoration in his pamphlet of 1800, *The Restoration of the Jews, the Crisis of All Nations*. He still suspected that this momentous eschatological event might 'not be very far off'.¹⁴ Meanwhile, why should 'the Christian nations' bolster up the Turks?¹⁵ God is employing the French, whatever horrible crimes have been committed in their country, to punish the antichristian and Muslim oppressors.

ENTER THE RIGHT: THOMAS WITHERBY

For Bicheno, then, and those who thought like him, world events were bearing out Mede's paradigm. For others, whose reaction to those events was different, the paradigm began to seem in need of amendment. An influential new departure in prophetic exegesis came from the distinguished perpetual curate of Nayland in Suffolk, William Jones (1726-1800), a respectable apologist and activist who had already tried to establish an anti-revolutionary association, the Society for the Reformation of Principles. Preaching on 26 January 1794, the Sunday before the commemoration of Charles I's martyrdom on 30 January, Jones expounded the description in II Thessalonians 2.1-10 of the Man of Sin, not as an image of the papal Antichrist, as Bishop Newton and John Gill had done, but as a prophecy of the anarchic and atheistic spirit at work in revolutionary France. Printed by request, the sermon had by 1796 passed through four editions.¹⁶

Jones' exegetical lead was followed by other important writers, including Henry Kett, Bishop Samuel Horsley, and George Stanley Faber, among whom the old paradigm was edited to accommodate it.¹⁷ Of greater significance for the present essay is the fact that Bicheno's *Restoration of the Jews* was very soon fallen upon by an offended right-wing Churchman, who in his *Observations on Mr Bicheno's book The Restoration . . .* [1800] objected to the French-Revolutionary hue of Bicheno's tract and for all practical purposes dismissed the entire paradigm, believing (with, as he was aware, Roman Catholics) that the reign of Antichrist was yet to come. This 'futurist' Churchman was Thomas Witherby (d.1830), a lawyer living at Enfield, philosemitic, somewhat Judaizing, and with a habit of interpreting Scripture prophecy literally, whereas the paradigmaticists saw everywhere in it

decodable symbols.¹⁸ Thus, against Bicheno's conventional idea that the earthquake in the city (Revelation 11.13) referred to a political upheaval in a part of the former Roman Empire, i.e. in France, Witherby declared that the earthquake would be literal and in Jerusalem (Revelation 11.8). Even if, said Witherby, we were to apply the earthquake to the French Revolution, which, for all his detestation of it, he assessed as 'a paltry event'¹⁹ - no doubt trying to preserve some sense of proportion - we should be left searching for the identities and miraculous deeds of the witnesses, the name of the murderous Antichrist, and the persons described as rejoicing in their deaths. What, he contended, the recent history of France *had* reflected was a catalogue of the scriptural marks of Antichrist: denial of the Father and the Son; 'seditious restlessness, and contempt of those in power, and a desire to pull them down';²⁰ scoffing at true religion; contempt of God's ordinances; covetous scheming by the well-to-do, which produced the Revolution in the first place; 'self-exaltation';²¹ satanic inspiration; idolatry; and, added thereto, the persecution of the saints, who were Roman Catholics. Yet the monstrous tyranny of Antichrist is still in the future; and Witherby, an unhailed master of illustration, describes Antichrist's emergence, apogee, and downfall by a lengthy and striking comparison with the American aloe,²² which has numerous thorned leaves: these leaves are fearsome enough, but at last, before the plant dies, there develops a most formidable, spear-like centre, pointing upright against heaven, and emblematic of the great Antichrist.

For Witherby, the archetypal identification of Antichrist with the Papacy has faded. Rome no longer means what it so horrifically meant to our Protestant forebears. Pius VI is to be pitied and preserved from harm. 'Shall we suffer an aged man, bowed down by sufferings, to be treated with disrespect, insulted, and possibly torn to pieces, when we have the power to prevent it, because Mr Bicheno and some others desire to see the fall of the Pope?'²³ The power described in Revelation 13 will be 'FAR WORSE than the Papacy.'²⁴

JOSEPH TYSO (1774-1852)

Essentially, in his literalism and futurism, Thomas Witherby had abandoned the old paradigmatic time-scale. Nevertheless, the categorical denial that the biblical days meant years was left to William Witherby, apparently his brother, the prominent London stationer, whose futurist treatises came out in 1818 and 1821.²⁵ More and more writers abandoned Mede's paradigm and supported futurism. One such convert, Samuel Roffey Maitland, launched a series of attacks on the paradigm from 1826. He was a trenchant writer, a theologian, and an acute and critical historian well able to demonstrate how history had sometimes been adjusted to support the paradigm. John Henry Newman also became a convert to futurism, probably through his attraction, and deference, to the Fathers. His Advent Sermons of 1835, which became Tract 83 of 1838, are eschatological discourses avowedly based on them. With the Irishman James Henthorn Todd's two sets of Donnellan Lectures,

published in 1840 and 1846, vastly learned and closely reasoned, futurist exegesis academically came of age - just before acceptance of the results of researches into the nature of the prophetic-looking biblical texts knocked its bottom out.²⁶

It is not difficult to see, at least in broad outline (which is all that can be attempted in this sketch), why futurism had established itself. The old paradigm belonged to a time when the main threat to this kingdom came from Romanism: from the Papacy, the Bourbons, the Pretenders. With the French Revolution and its prolonged military aftermath a new menace appeared: that of the forcible dissolution of traditional society and with it all religion, protestant or catholic. Thomas Witherby, accusing Bicheno of encouraging the Jews to revolt against their overlords, warned that violent revolution could never establish the Kingdom of God; and futurists, like S. R. Maitland, tried to eradicate the bogus papal Antichrist of the paradigm and detect the future, real one - 'of downright barefaced infidelity - something more like what was exhibited in France during the Revolution' than any known Romanist error²⁷ - presaged by an apostasy already rising behind the backs of the Median paradigmatisers, whose eyes are continually misapplied to the task of paralleling prophecies and popes. Sympathy with persecuted Roman Catholics in the 1790s made it easier to listen to Rome (and not only about eschatology), a tendency reinforced by the new Romantic historical interest in the medieval and patristic ages, and the Fathers yielded futurism. Meanwhile, the paradigm manifestly got into trouble. The 1260 years had been thought to have passed, yet the Papacy held on, the End held off, and always there were exegetical disagreements. Literalism - in line with the empirical, scientific spirit - was coming into vogue, now making it more obvious than before that eschewing the literal meaning of the biblical texts in the interests of establishing the paradigm had opened the door to a throng of rival interpreters armed with chronologies and lists of symbols. The Baptist futurist, Joseph Tyso, in his *Elucidation*, made great play with such differences, which he heightened by tabulation: if Maitland is the critical historian in futurism, Newman the poet, and Todd the attempter of a *summa*, Tyso is the statistician and visual-aids man.

Tyso was born at Thurleigh, Bedfordshire. He received believer's baptism at Colchester in 1798, and on the church's recommendation was admitted to Bristol Academy the next year. He left Bristol in 1803, and held pastorates at Helston and Watchet and then at Wallingford, where he ministered for nearly thirty years, resigning only in January 1848 on grounds of impaired health.²⁸ While still an adherent of the paradigm, he published *An Inquiry after Prophetic Truth relative to the Restoration of the Jews and the Millennium* (1831).²⁹ In 1838 he proclaimed himself a futurist, in *An Elucidation of the Prophecies*. After nearly 'half a century'³⁰ of unquestioning acquiescence in the calculations other paradigmatisers had produced, he had given, he says, 'the mystic interpretation of the prophetic numbers . . . to the winds',³¹ and he regretted having 'aided the delusion'³² in his former book. He does not tell us what in particular had stimulated this

development, but one may guess from the evidence of *An Elucidation* that, apart from anything else, he had been impressed by the mounting calls for literal exegesis. He prints a *catena* of quotations of these calls even from well-known paradigmatisers, including, amazingly, Bishop Newton, who had written, 'We should never depart from the *literal* sense of Scripture without absolute necessity for so doing.'³³ Tyso also cites S. R. Maitland's *Second Enquiry* and 'Burgh on the Revelation', presumably William Burgh's *The Apocalypse Unfulfilled, or An Exposition of the Book of Revelation*; he seems also to have read William Witherby's *Review of Scripture, in Testimony of the Truth of the Second Advent* (1818). These are all futurist works.

Tyso declares that the Jews will be restored, the Temple rebuilt, and sacrifice offered. Only then will the apocalyptic beasts, who have existed for a long time, be fully manifested. The first beast (Revelation 13.1) is 'civil despotism',³⁴ 'in embryo in every despotic government, and in the "un-Holy Alliance".'³⁵ The second (13.11) 'is *ecclesiastical* tyranny, as exemplified in the church of Rome, that mother of harlots. Political tyranny alone could not accomplish all its diabolical purposes without the aid of ecclesiastical tyranny.'³⁶ But 'immediately after the tribulation of those days the signs of the second advent will appear.'³⁷ Thus futurism, a doctrine promoted by Jesuit scholarship to remove Antichrist from the present and so preserve Rome's legitimacy and convert Protestants, and then found in High Church circles as they responded to the age of revolution, can at length be seen arriving in a quarter traditionally arch-protestant, not to say Leftish, suitably adapted.

NOTES

This essay is based on 'Eschatological Prophecy in the English Theological Tradition, c.1700-c.1840', the author's unpublished University of London PhD thesis, 1982, hereinafter cited as 'Eschatological Prophecy'. Works referred to below were published in London unless otherwise stated.

- 1 On Ickworth and the Earl-Bishop, see Gervase Jackson-Stops, *Ickworth*, revised edition, National Trust, 1990.
- 2 For Mede's exegesis, see e.g. R. Bransby-Cooper, *A Translation of Mede's Clavis Apocalyptica*, 1833, and R. G. Clouse, 'The Rebirth of Millenarianism' in Peter Toon, ed., *Puritans, the Millennium and the Future of Israel: Puritan Eschatology, 1600-1660*, 1970, pp.42-65.
- 3 Thomas Newton, *Dissertations on the Prophecies*, 3 vols, vol. I, 1754, unpaginated Dedication, where Wade is described but not named.
- 4 Richard Hurd, *An Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies Concerning the Christian Church; and, in particular, Concerning Papal Rome, 1772*, p.viii, quoting the trust deed founding the Lectures.
- 5 *ibid.*, pp.ix-x. Unfortunately this provision was not always carried out.
- 6 For example, William Whiston, *Essay on the Revelation of St John*, 1706, pp.90, 227, 235, understood that the earthquake-wrecked tenth part of the city (Rev. 11.13) would be France; and Robert Fleming, jun., had predicted in 1701 that the French monarchy would be humiliated by 1794: see 'An Epistolary Discourse. . . Concerning the Rise and Fall of Rome Papal', *Discourses on Several Subjects*, pp.lxv, lxxviii, lxxiv.
- 7 p.iv. But Bicheno was not alone. See Joseph Lomas Towers's anonymously published *Illustrations of Prophecy*, 1796. Towers, a Unitarian and Dr Williams's Librarian, was anti-

- papal and a republican. See also David Simpson, *A Plea for Religion and the Sacred Writings*, 1797 etc., reeking with disillusionment, disquiet, disgust. Only death prevented Simpson's secession from the Established Church's ministry.
- 8 *Signs of the Times*, p.17.
 - 9 *ibid.*, p.26.
 - 10 *ibid.*, p.166.
 - 11 *ibid.*, p.168.
 - 12 *ibid.*, p.184n.
 - 13 *ibid.*, p.212.
 - 14 *Restoration of the Jews*, p.5.
 - 15 *ibid.*, p.55n.
 - 16 It is Sermon XV - 'The Man of Sin' - in *The Theological and Miscellaneous Works of the Rev. William Jones*, ed. William Stevens, 6 vols, 1810, vol.iv, pp.217-29.
 - 17 For an account of these writers, see 'Eschatological Prophecy', pp.72-90, 174-9.
 - 18 Comparatively few facts about Witherby's life come easily to hand. He was, however, presumably the attorney entered in *Browne's General Law List for the Year 1799* as of '7, Great Winchester-street' (now EC2) and 'vestry-clerk of St Edmund the King, and St Nicholas-acorns, in Cornhill and Langbourn-wards'. He produced other conservative work and corresponded with Bishops Horsley and Howley. Interestingly, his *Observations* show he had an enlightened, deeply Christian, attitude to women. Witherby's eschatology may have been influenced by Bengel: see 'Eschatological Prophecy', pp.104-10.
 - 19 Witherby, *Observations*, p.64.
 - 20 *ibid.*, p.299.
 - 21 *ibid.*, p.303.
 - 22 *ibid.*, pp.104-5.
 - 23 *ibid.*, p.44.
 - 24 *ibid.*, p.156.
 - 25 Respectively, *A Review of Scripture, in Testimony of the Truth of the Second Advent, the First Resurrection, and the Millennium*, by 'A Layman', and *Hints humbly submitted to Commentators*. William (1758-1840) was Master of the Worshipful Company of Stationers for the year 1821-2.
 - 26 The writers named in this paragraph are individually discussed in 'Eschatological Prophecy', pp.110-42. Until c.1820 Maitland was a Dissenter.
 - 27 S. R. Maitland, *A Second Enquiry into the Grounds on which the Prophetic Period of Daniel and St John has been Supposed to Consist of 1260 Years*, 1829, p.105.
 - 28 Based on an account of Tyso's life in the Baptist Union Committee's *Manual of the Baptist Denomination for the Year 1853*, 1853, pp.48-9.
 - 29 Tyso's biblical researches were prompted by contemporary discussion of a personal reign of Christ upon earth (*Inquiry after Prophetic Truth*, Preface, p.3); and even in that earlier book a general literalism was sought in the interpretation of prophecy, though not, of course, pursued radically (*ibid.*, pp.111,12).
 - 30 Tyso, *Elucidation*, p.76.
 - 31 *ibid.*, p.5.
 - 32 *ibid.*, p.76.
 - 33 *ibid.*, p.12.
 - 34 *ibid.*, p.59.
 - 35 *ibid.*, p.221.
 - 36 *ibid.*, p.60.
 - 37 *ibid.*

JOHN A. ODDY *Retired schoolmaster, King's Lynn, and a Churchman interested since 1955 in Baptists of the Hanoverian age.*

NOTE: WILLIAM RICHARDS (1749-1818)

Dr Oddy is compiling a selection of the printed and manuscript writings of the Baptist radical, controversialist and historian, William Richards. The selection is to be prefaced by a substantial and critical biographical essay, incorporating some new research. Dr Oddy is also campaigning for official commemoration of William Richards in King's Lynn, his adopted town, his invaluable history of which is the most elegant and provocative of all its histories.