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**The Book of Revelation in Greek, edited from Ancient Authorities with a new English Version and various readings  
Samuel Prideaux Tregelles  
Cambridge University Press [Cambridge Library Collection]  
2009 [1844]  
208pp. (pbk) ISBN 978-1-108-00745-0 £14.99**

There is something a little strange about being asked to review this volume, which is a digital reprint of a book that appeared over 160 years ago. Clearly the editor isn't expecting me to give my readers my thoughts on the last book of the Bible. As I am not a classical scholar, I hardly think that my readers will be interested in my explaining in what ways Tregelles's text of 1844 differs from the one that appeared in volume VI of his final Greek New Testament, which was published nearly thirty years later in 1872, let alone my opinion of Tregelles's translation of the text. His introductory account of the text, the previous editions of it and of the MSS, from which the text could be emended, is typically thorough, but it was superceded by much fuller treatments by Tregelles himself in his *Account of the Printed Text of the New Testament* (1854) and his 'Introduction' to the *Textual Criticism of the New Testament* (1856).

The significance of this twenty-first century publication however, is not in its content but in its existence. Having entertained a solitary interest in the work of Tregelles for more than half a century, the reviewer is astonished to find that scholars at Cambridge have become so interested in his textual work that the University Press has produced in paperback not only a five-volume edition of Tregelles's Greek New Testament which appeared in seven volumes between 1857 and 1879, but also this earlier volume with which he 'tested the water'. It is hard for Christians in Europe to realise today how attached the evangelical world was in the early nineteenth century to the received text and the AV translation based on it. In this his first published volume dealing with textual criticism Tregelles is on the defensive, saying 'I am perfectly aware that many feel a dread of any criticism being applied to the text of Scripture, regarding it as too

sacred to be touched' (p. iii). In fact the response was encouraging and twelve years later he could write: 'When I remember how differently some now regard critical principles to what was the case comparatively few years ago, I cannot do other than feel thankful that results should so far have been attained. Twenty years ago things were not so regarded in this country as is the case at present' ('Introduction' to the *Textual Criticism of the New Testament*, p. ix). The importance of the part played by Tregelles in educating the English-speaking Christian world in these matters is manifest in the republication of his work today.

The only worrying part about it is that in America there is still a hidebound conservative segment of the evangelical world, which still treat the *textus receptus* as the divinely ordained text just as they cling to what they call the King James translation, referring to any revised version as the 'reversed vision'. Just one example—and there are plenty more—of the sort of attitude to which I am referring can be found at a South Dakota website <http://scatteredchristians.org/Philadelphia.html> where the expositor of the period of the Philadelphian church writes (original spelling throughout):

Also in this period is the most overwhelming wave of atheism, Communism, and Christ-rejecting scholarship that the world has ever seen. Spinoza, Leibnitz, Descarte, Hegel, Rosseau, Astruc, Kant, Weald, Delitzsch, Wellhausen, Semmler, Neuman, Schleirmacher, the Jesuits, Lessing, Tregelles, Tischendorf, Freud, Huxley, Bauer, Marx, Darwin, Strauss, James, and all their Mafia, Darin, a God-forsaken monkey with his tail cut off and Sigmund Freud, the sex-neurotic, who wrote books on dreams.

Such an uncharitable and abusive display of evangelical venom is disheartening in any case, but to find Samuel Prideaux Tregelles included in this list leads me to fear that the republication of his works by the Cambridge University Press will only serve to confirm bigots of this ilk in their ignorance. On the other hand if they were actually to read Tregelles's introduction they would have to revise their judgment, but my guess is that they won't allow themselves to be confused by facts.

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