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A Forgotten Pioneer: Granville Penn and the Victory of Vaticanus

Jan Krans / Bert Jan Lietaert Peerbolte / An-Ting Yi

1. Introduction: Granville Penn¹

Granville Penn (1761-1844)² was a self-made scholar who is remembered, if at all, rather as a “biblical geologist” and historiographer of his great-grandfather’s life than as a textual critic. At age eighteen Penn enrolled in Magdalen College, Oxford, but he never graduated.³ Financially independent because of his ancestry, he did not pursue an academic career.

His great-grandfather, William Penn (1621-1670), whose biography he published in 1833,⁴ is still famous for his failed attempts to subdue The Netherlands in the English-Dutch wars of the seventeenth century. Thanks to Charles II, grandfather Penn, William Jr. (1644-1718) received a large area south and west of New Jersey, in 1681, which was named Penn-Sylvania.

With his second wife, Hannah Callowhill, William Jr. had a son Thomas (1702-1775), the father of our Granville. Thomas Penn continued the family tradition in which religious convictions based on the bible played a crucial role. In 1751 he married Lady Juliana Fermor (1729-1801), also a descendent of a rich family.

So, Granville was born into a family of wealth, both financially and spiritually, and he did not need an academic career for economic reasons.

After his – failed – Oxford adventure, Granville Penn took a position as assistant clerk in the war department, which he would keep until the death of his brother John (1760-1834). The last ten years of his life Granville spent on managing the family estates of Stoke Park, Buckinghamshire, and Pennsylvania Castle in Portland. In 1791 he married Isabella, the eldest daughter of General Gordon Forbes, and the couple had seven children – four daughters and three sons.

Penn’s perhaps most remarkable writing was his “biblical geology” of

¹ A preliminary version of this contribution was presented by the first two authors at the SBL annual meeting in Boston, November 2017. The third author added a number of details on B03 and subsequently the three authors reworked the material into its present form.

² Dec. 9, 1761 - Sept. 28, 1844. See Fell-Smith / Smail, Penn.

³ According to the *Alumni Oxonienses*, this was on Nov. 11, 1780.

⁴ Penn, Memorials.

1822, titled *A Comparative Estimate of the Mineral and Mosaical Geologies*.⁵ In this work, Penn deals with geology in order to harmonize “mineral,” that is: scientific discoveries made in his day with the “mosaic” account of creation as given in the book of Genesis. In scholarly circles the work was severely criticized, and rightly so.

For the purpose of this article, however, it is his work on the New Testament that attracts our attention, for it is here that Penn’s ideas cast a surprising light on the confused state of textual scholarship of his day. In 1836 he published the fruit of thirty years’ labour, a new and in his eyes fresh translation of the New Testament:

*The Book of the New Covenant of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: Being a Critical Revision of the Text and Translation of the English Version of the New Testament, with the Aid of Most Ancient Manuscripts Unknown to the Age in which that Version was Last Put Forth by Authority.*⁶

A year later Penn defended the extraordinary choices made in the 1836 translation. He canvassed the need for such a new translation, and the necessity to incorporate new manuscript evidence in his enterprise: *Annotations to the Book of the New Covenant: With an Expository Preface*.⁷

The one manuscript that he thought should prevail over all others, was *Codex Vaticanus* (B03). Forgotten as he may be, and albeit for good reasons, this moment marks the inception of the “victory of Vaticanus.” But before we turn to his estimation of B03, let us first explore why Penn thought a new translation was necessary at all.

2. Penn’s translation

The title of Penn’s translation gives away several elements. First of all, Penn conceives his work as a *revision* of the King James New Testament. The KJV has *authority*, but it is problematic, as a text and as a translation. The first key word is *Latin* – the second one being *Textus Receptus*.

Penn sees the KJV as the latest link in a long chain of English translations, beginning with Wycliffe in the 1380s. Each link in the chain, from Tyndale (1526) via Coverdale and several others, up to the KJV itself, is a revision,

⁵ London: Ogle, Duncan, and Co. A second, expanded edition appeared in 1825.

⁶ Penn, Book.

⁷ Penn, *Annotations* (1837). The Greek motto on the title page is translated on page 48: “The complete Christian ought not to establish his faith by disputable texts; those which are agreed upon, and universally acknowledged, sufficiently declaring every thing respecting the entire doctrine of Christians.” See also Penn, *Annotations* (1838; 1841).

just a revision, of the previous link. Moreover, the revision was never done critically, but only haphazardly. And it has to be remembered that Wycliffe translated the Latin Vulgate, not the Greek. And Tyndale, and his successors, kept many elements that betray this Latin connection. Even worse: Tyndale used Erasmus' edition for his revision, but he will have looked, just as Luther did, more at Erasmus' Latin than at his Greek. And that Latin text of Erasmus (besides being Latin) is itself not a consistent translation of the Greek, but a revision (again) of the Latin Vulgate. In Penn's own words:

... those revisers ... were too easily satisfied with the language they found in the existing version; and, though they modernised the English to the standard of their own day, they suffered many words of interpretation to pass, which bear an unequivocal stamp of the intermediate Latin; and which they would not have employed, if their office had been that of translation, and not merely of revision.⁸

Examples of this "traditional *inertia*" are not hard to find.⁹ The most conspicuous one, according to Penn, is the word "Testament" itself. Whereas the Greek word διαθήκη can at least also mean "covenant," the rendering chosen in Latin, "testamentum," is just plain wrong in most cases. But Wycliffe took it over from the Latin, and it was there to stay in English.¹⁰

More specific examples are found in Mark 5,29 and 2Cor 3,6.¹¹ In Mark 5,29 μάστιξ is rendered as "plague," obviously related to the Vulgate's "plaga," but nevertheless wrong: it should be "scourge" (as Penn has it; more recent translations have "suffering," "disease," or "trouble"). In 2Cor 3,6 the phrase ὅς καὶ ἰκάνωσεν ἡμᾶς διακόνους καινῆς διαθήκης is translated as "Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament," which Penn sees as Englishing the Vulgate reading "qui et idoneos nos fecit ministros novi testamenti." He himself translates: "who also hath qualified us to be ministers of the New Covenant."¹²

⁸ Penn, Annotations (1837), 6-7.

⁹ See Penn, Annotations (1837), 174, for this expression.

¹⁰ The issue is far more complicated, but Penn has a long rant on just this element.

¹¹ See Penn, Annotations (1837), 14.

¹² A nice example is found in Matt 27,9. In the citation of Zach 11,13, ἔλαβον is parsed and translated as a third person plural: "they tooke"; recourse to the Hebrew of Zach 11,13 shows that the first person singular must be intended. If this choice is made (several modern translations at least mention the possibility), ἔδωκαν in the following verse should probably be ἔδωκα. The latter is not only attested, but the former is easily explained as textual corruption (see Penn, Annotations (1837), 174, and Book, 55b). For other examples see Luke 22,29-30; Acts 14,12 ("Jupiter" and "Mercurius" instead of "Zeus" and "Hermes"; here however Penn makes a concession to "the ordinary and untutored English reader"

Penn even introduced his own verse numbering, which makes his translation and notes somewhat cumbersome to use. One advantage of the new numbering is that he does not have so-called empty verses, where the elimination of TR interpolations leads to verses without any text (such as Mark 7,16; John 5,3-4; Acts 8,37).¹³

The question does arise: why did Penn himself not make an entirely new translation, but only a revision? Here the positive side of “revision” comes to the fore, as long as it is done critically and thoroughly: it takes less time. His aim is to finally eradicate all traces of the Latin tradition.¹⁴ Let us now move on to the textual side of the story.

3. Penn’s text-critical method: antiquity means priority

The next problem Penn had to deal with were the existing editions of the Greek New Testament. In his words:

... it is a very singular anomaly, that although we have, by public authority, a standard English version, yet there exists no standard Greek text for the original of that version.¹⁵

Penn is unhappy with the *Textus Receptus* as it was available to the King James translators, in the editions of Erasmus, Stephanus, and Beza. But later editions are problematic as well: Elzevier, the London Polyglot, Mill, Bengel, Wettstein, Griesbach, Matthaei, and Birch. All that has been accomplished is that he now knows how bad the *Textus Receptus* actually is,¹⁶ but an alternative for these editions has not yet been found. His main objection is that these editions do not represent the “actual state of the original text.”¹⁷

Penn considers the *Textus Receptus* the result of a long history of textual corruption. In his words:

(Annotations [1837], 308): in his translation he maintains “Jupiter” and adopts “Hermes,” but with a marginal note: “Latin: Mercurius”); Acts 28,2. At John 5,2 Penn points out that “porch” (following “porticus”) no longer means “portico” (yet his translation still has “porches”).

¹³ There is a conversion table in Penn, Book, iv, which however does not cover every disturbance. For instance, in Luke 22 verses 29 and 30 are joined, as well as verses 67 and 68, and verses 43-44 are omitted for text-critical reasons. In the end Luke 22,71 is Luke 22,67 in Penn’s numbering.

¹⁴ There is actually some irony in Penn’s adoption of B03 as his base text (on which see below), because in general it is closer to the Greek text underlying the Vulgate than the *Textus Receptus* itself. So, he latinizes and de-latinizes at the same time.

¹⁵ Penn, Annotations (1837), 17.

¹⁶ Cf. Penn, Annotations (1837), 17: “... yet, it is by these later editions only, that we have at length acquired a thorough knowledge of the actual state of the original text.”

¹⁷ Penn, Annotations (1837), 17.

That text, is no other than the result of the various transcriptural errors, omissions, and additions (very partially and imperfectly corrected), which have accrued to the primitive text, during the thousand obscure ages that intervened between the age of the oldest surviving MS. and the invention of printing.¹⁸

Breaking with a long, learned tradition that preceded him, Penn moves away from the idea that “reception” is a sign of authority. One can also say that Penn finally applies to the full one of Wettstein’s text-critical rules, namely that there is no authority in printed editions.¹⁹ In his eyes, all those editions had no more authority than the manuscripts on which they were based. In his search for a better witness to the original text, Penn considers the “highest attainable antiquity” the decisive criterion, and thus arrives at B03 as his starting point. Penn describes his choice and motives as follows:

Instead of the text vaguely called “*textus receptus*” or the “*received text*,” (a text unsupported by any one MS., ancient or modern,) I have taken the continued and entire text of the *most ancient* surviving manuscript, the “*Codex Vaticanus*” or *Vatican MS.*, noted 1209 in the Vatican catalogue, and marked B by Wetstein; making it the basis and substance of the revision. This celebrated MS. possesses, from its acknowledged priority in age to all other existing MSS., an authority to which none of those can lay claim, by which the latest revisers of our authorised version sought to improve the English translation. It is the only surviving MS. so ancient as to have been written, not only before the general adoption of the *Ammonian* and *Euthalian* divisions of the New Scriptures, but also, before the incorporation of the name of ‘*Ephesus*’ into the context of St. Paul’s introduction to his circular epistle to the churches of Asia Minor; which epistle has become entitled, from the eminence of Ephesus among those churches, the ‘*Epistle to the Ephesians*’.²⁰

Penn’s opinion of Codex Vaticanus is based on the collations of Mico (used by Bentley)²¹ and Birch,²² and most of all on Johann Leonhard Hug’s

¹⁸ Penn, Annotations (1837), 18.

¹⁹ For Wettstein’s text-critical rules now see Castelli, Johann Jakob Wettstein’s Principles, esp. § 3.1.2 (116-126) for her discussion and analysis, and 324-331, for Wettstein’s formulation of the rule with her translation and notes.

²⁰ Penn, Annotations (1837), 28-29.

²¹ Apostolo Mico’s collation, preserved in a 1524 edition of the Greek New Testament (kept in Cambridge, Trinity College Library, shelf mark Adv.e.2.2 [formerly B.17.3]), was published by Woide: Woide, Appendix.

²² Birch, Evangelia, etc. Penn in particular criticizes Johann Martin Augustin Scholz for not mentioning Bentley; see Penn, Annotations (1837), 48 n. 1.

demonstration of its antiquity.²³ Here we have to briefly explain how the world history of Napoleon Bonaparte and his victory over the Papal states in 1797 created the conditions for the revolution of New Testament textual scholarship in the nineteenth century.

As a result of the Treaty of Tolentino Napoleon's administrators had a large number of treasures from the Vatican transported to Paris, with Pierre Claude François Daunou (1761-1840) as the leading scholar of the undertaking.²⁴ The – to us – most important of the treasures was Ms. number 1209 from the Vatican Library: Codex Vaticanus was sent to Paris on 24 July 1799, and probably returned to Rome already in June 1814, shortly after Napoleon's first defeat.

Thanks to its temporary presence in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* Hug could study the manuscript extensively, and establish its early fourth-century origin. In 1810 he published a lecture, which impressed and convinced Penn.²⁵

In general, Penn had good information on B03,²⁶ but of course his dependence on indirect sources made him adopt some readings that B03 actually does not have.²⁷

²³ Hug, Codicis.

²⁴ See for this episode Cuccia, Archives.

²⁵ Penn even reprinted Hug's treatise in his volume of Annotations (1837), 91-112, as an appendix to his own Preface.

²⁶ Some examples of B03 readings adopted by Penn: (a. interpolations undone) Matt 6,13 *om.* B03 MCT Penn | *add.* doxology TR \mathfrak{M} (see Annotations [1837], 138-139); Matt 23,14 *om.* B MCT Penn | *add.* TR \mathfrak{M} (160; cf. 63); Mark 16,9-20 *om.* B03 MCT (within double brackets) Penn | *add.* longer ending TR \mathfrak{M} (215-217); Luke 22,43-44 *om.* B03 MCT (within double brackets) Penn | *add.* TR \mathfrak{M} (248-249); John 5,3-4 *om.* B03 MCT Penn | *add.* TR \mathfrak{M} (262; cf. 63); John 7,53-8,11 *om.* B03 MCT Penn | *add.* TR \mathfrak{M} (266-271; cf. 217); Rom 8,1 *om.* B03 MCT Penn | *add.* μή κατὰ σάρκα περιπατοῦσιν ἀλλὰ κατὰ πνεῦμα TR \mathfrak{M} (335-336); (b. other readings): Gal 4,25 δὲ Ἀγάρ B03 MCT Penn | γὰρ Ἀγάρ TR \mathfrak{M} (381 [at v.24]; cf. 63); Jude 5 Ἰησοῦς B03 MCT Penn (trans. "Joshua") | ὁ Κύριος TR \mathfrak{M} (473-474); in 2Cor 1,6-7 Penn follows B03; the text varies widely between MCT, \mathfrak{M} and TR (370; cf. 63); a similar case is presented by Jude 22-23 (475).

²⁷ The limitation of Birch and Woide can be seen in the following telling examples: Mark 5,13 ὡς δισχίλιοι B03 (in shorthand form) MCT | ἦσαν δὲ ὡς δισχίλιοι TR \mathfrak{M} | *om.* Birch Penn (Annotations [1837], 191; Book, 68b) (Woide has ὡς δισχίλιοι); John 1,18 μονογενὴς θεός B03 MCT | ὁ μονογενὴς υἱός TR \mathfrak{M} | "the only begotten Son" Penn (*om.* ὁ in Birch and Woide); John 1,42 Ἰωάννου B03* MCT | Ἰωνᾶ B03² TR \mathfrak{M} Penn (no variant in Birch and Woide, though their base text has Ἰωαννου); Eph 1,1 *om.* B03* | ἐν Ἐφέσῳ B03² MCT (within double brackets) Penn ("in Ephesus"; marginal note: "also in Laodicea"; cf. Annotations [1837], 383-384) (no variant in Birch and Woide).

Penn's preference for the oldest achievable manuscript does mean an important step forward in the methodology of New Testament textual criticism, even though this preference was developed by later scholars into the now still current criterion of the best possible manuscript, regardless of its age. Penn himself never published an edition of the New Testament. What he did do, however, was to revise an ordinary edition of the *Textus Receptus*, by introducing into it all the readings known from B03. Interestingly, the result is what he calls an "assimilated Greek text," which in turn he used to "assimilate" the English version.²⁸ This provisional, private, more or less diplomatic edition became the basis of his revision of the KJV.

Like every translator, Penn stumbled upon a number of readings that raised suspicion in his mind. This is where, at least in the nineteenth century, conjectural emendation comes in.

4. Penn's conjectures

When we started studying Penn's translation and notes, we found out that he made numerous conjectures on the Greek text, almost invariably completely forgotten, and probably rightly so.

We had hoped to find the following pattern, which would have fully justified his place as a pioneer. The switch from *Textus Receptus* to *Codex Vaticanus* would make the text rougher at many places. At some of these, the text of *Vaticanus* itself would have to be regarded as corrupt, but it would at least show that the later Byzantine or *Textus Receptus* reading is just a scribal correction to smoothen the difficulty. But such corrections made by copyists are not critical, and clearly secondary. Hence, a textual critic who knows the patterns of textual corruption can make a better correction, i.e., a conjecture that solves the difficulty and also explains the corruption. In short: the move to the earlier text brings you closer to the original, but it does not solve all problems; undoing the work of later scribes may also entail a need for conjectural emendation.

Alas, unlike Holwerda, a few decades later, Penn refuses to comply to our pattern.²⁹ He makes conjectures, scores of them, but as a rule not at places where *Vaticanus* and *Textus Receptus* diverge, but at places where he himself sees some difficulty.³⁰

²⁸ See for Penn's description in *Annotations* (1837), 48.

²⁹ See Kamphuis, *New Testament*, esp. 223-224.

³⁰ The only exception is Rom 8,2, where he turns out to make the same simple conjecture that was to be proposed by Westcott and Hort almost half a century later: see cj10606 in Krans / Lietaert Peerbolte, Amsterdam, <<https://ntvnr.uni-muenster.de/nt-conjectures?conjID=cj10606>>. Here the conjectural omission of $\sigma\epsilon$ is transcriptionally explained as due to dittography of $\sigma\epsilon$ in $\eta\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\theta\epsilon\rho\omega\sigma\epsilon$.

But what enabled him to make that many conjectures? He had a powerful toolbox at his disposal, for which he went back in time to as early as 1566 – and to the Dutch, of course –, namely Willem Canter’s “De ratione emendandi scriptores Graecos syntagma” (“Treatise on the Method of Correcting Greek Writers”).³¹ He even reprints excerpts from this treatise in his Preface,³² just as he reprints Hug’s demonstration of the antiquity of Codex Vaticanus. Canter gives an overview of all kinds of textual corruption he observed in the manuscripts, such as confusion of characters, incorrect word division, and misinterpreted abbreviations. A textual critic can simply assume such an error was made and then reverse it: that is almost all it takes for a conjectural emendation.

Especially Canter’s eighth class of errors, the abbreviations, becomes a rich source of conjectural inspiration in Penn’s hands. He means not just the confusion of *nomina sacra*,³³ but all kinds of abbreviations. In our view, he stretches the applicability of this category beyond the point of breaking, especially since Canter dealt with minuscule script, whereas Penn has to do with the uncial script of Codex Vaticanus.³⁴ The difference does not matter to him, it seems. He describes the phenomenon as follows:

... the general principle observed in abbreviated writing was to preserve the first and last letter or syllable, leaving the intermediate omitted portion to be recovered by the sense; which, if it was not correctly seized by the engrosser, caused a false, or a various reading.³⁵

We will present some examples to illustrate how Penn does New Testament conjectural emendation. Readers can consult the Amsterdam Database of New Testament Conjectural Emendation should they wish to see Penn’s conjectures with all details in their pristine glory.³⁶

In Matt 11,12 it is said that “the kingdom of heaven suffers violence” (ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν βιάζεται), where the meaning of βιάζεται has caused many exegetical headaches. The parallel text in Luke (16,16) has εὐαγγελίζεται, “is preached.” We – or at least Penn – would like that word for Matthew as well, but transcriptional probability prevents such a conjecture, of course. So Penn starts looking for a word closer to βιάζεται and finds βοᾶται, “is shouted,”

³¹ Canter, Ratione. See on Canter and his treatise Vanek, *Ars*, 52-62.

³² Penn, *Annotations* (1837), 53-59.

³³ Some famous various readings exist, as well as some interesting conjectures made by Bentley, Hort, and others.

³⁴ Hug even included a small facsimile of some lines.

³⁵ Penn, *Annotations* (1837), 76.

³⁶ See a2754 in Krans / Lietaert Peerbolte, Amsterdam Database, <<https://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/nt-conjectures?authorID=a2754>>.

or, as he renders it, “is proclaimed.”³⁷ The recipe is clear: beginning and end of the word are the same, and the wrong letters are due to the “engrosser.” The meaning and verb of course nicely correspond to John the Baptist being called a φωνὴ βοῶντος, “voice of one who shouts” (Matt 3,3 etc.).

In Matt 11,19, the B03 reading allows Penn to correct the text: “wisdom is justified” ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων αὐτῆς, “by her works,” not “by her children,” ἀπὸ τῶν τέκνων αὐτῆς. But what about the (no longer) parallel text Luke 7,35, ἐδικαιώθη ἡ σοφία ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν τέκνων αὐτῆς? Penn correctly detects that τέκνων in Matthew is due to harmonisation with Luke, but he himself now harmonises Luke with Matthew, at least in meaning, by assuming that τέκνων in Luke 7,35 is a corruption:

It shews, that the ἐργων of St. Matthew had been expressed by τεκτωνιον in St. Luke’s Gospel; the abbreviation of which word, τεκνιον, was readily mistaken for τεκνιον, and afterward changed to τεκνων, as we find the two readings, τεκνω and τεκνια, in Mark, x. 24 ...³⁸

As we see, Penn again uses the explanation of a mistaken abbreviation. The reason he wants to reconcile Matthew and Luke is simple but revelatory: “our Lord used only one of the two words, either ‘works,’ or ‘children’.” Apparently he is not concerned to introduce a hapax legomenon, and a very rare word at that, τεκτωνιον, supposed to mean “building.”

In 1Cor 15,5, Paul says that the risen Lord appeared to “the twelve” (τοῖς δώδεκα), which is odd, because Judas will not be envisaged here, and Cephas has already been mentioned. It is actually not that odd, since “the twelve” can be a standing expression, but Penn does not accept that idea, referring to instances in the gospels where “the ten” are mentioned (Matt 20,24 etc.), or “the eleven” (Luke 24,9 etc.). The existence of a variant reading ἑνδεκα in 1Cor 15,5 at least demonstrates that a scribe could be sensitive to the problem as well. But how can one transcriptionally lower that number “twelve” to “ten”? Penn does not come with the idea that numerals themselves are often abbreviated and therefore easily confounded, but splits δώδεκα into δὲ δέκα: the abbreviated δε having been assumed for the δω of δωδεκα, and so introduced, in an early age, into the text.³⁹

Two weaknesses hamper Penn’s conjectures, one technical one, and one

³⁷ See cj15855 in Krans / Lietaert Peerbolte, Amsterdam, <<http://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/nt-conjectures?conjID=cj15855>>.

³⁸ Penn, Annotations (1837), 142.

³⁹ Penn, Annotations (1837), 366. The result is cj15880 in Krans / Lietaert Peerbolte, Amsterdam, <<https://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/nt-conjectures?conjID=cj15880>>. The conjecture is similar to Beza’s (cj10172, <<https://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/nt-conjectures?conjID=cj10172>>).

general one. On a technical level, he does not realise that the appeal to abbreviations does not work nearly as well when applied to uncial script. Glosses, marginal notes, and confusion of letters have all been amply demonstrated in the manuscripts, but the widespread use of abbreviations waiting to be misunderstood is a personal figment of Penn's phantasy. We now know that even the earliest manuscripts we have – earlier than the one Penn had access to, and then only indirectly so – have *scriptio plena* throughout, except for numerals (not always) and *nomina sacra*. As a rule, his transcriptional explanations fail.

The general weakness of his conjectures is a lack of urgency. The exegetical difficulties he observes are not of the kind that naturally lead to conjectural solutions. Most of his conjectures, then, are reduced to interesting samples of problems a learned commentator could perceive in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁴⁰ Perhaps though his forces found better employment in the daily affairs of his estate.

5. Conclusions

If Penn deserves to be remembered in New Testament textual scholarship at all, it is as a pioneer and precursor concerning the importance of Codex Vaticanus, not as a conjectural critic. His decisions are permeated by an independent, optimistic spirit, and his textual commentary is a strange mixture of the solid and the outlandish. He lacked complete and precise information on the manuscript and an encompassing textual theory, and yet his work illustrates the turning of the textual tides.

All in all, despite the numerous flaws in his attempts to revise both the English translation and the Greek text of the New Testament, thanks to Napoleon and to Hug, our amateur critic still stands as the one who initiated the victory of Vaticanus.

Summary

Granville Penn (1761-1844) was an amateur textual critic, who intended to revise the English translation of the New Testament, and brought in evidence from Codex Vaticanus (B03) in order to support his argument. Already in the nineteenth century

⁴⁰ This lack of urgency is even more prominent in some conjectures that are clearly harmonising. Penn's appeal to the "primitive truth" leads to him wanting that "truth" to be consistent on a rather "primitive" level as well. Examples of "harmonising" conjectures include cj12272 on Matt 1,8-17 (Krans / Lietaert Peerbolte, Amsterdam, <<https://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/nt-conjectures?conjID=cj12272>>); cj15865 on Luke 7,35 (<<https://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/nt-conjectures?conjID=cj15865>>); cj15869 on John 19,14 (<<https://ntvmr.uni-muenster.de/nt-conjectures?conjID=cj15869>>); in a way the conjecture on Matt 11,12, discussed above, is harmonising as well.

his work was largely forgotten, but it does form evidence of the growing scholarly estimation of the manuscript in his day. Penn's numerous conjectures offer an interesting view of his approach, and his revision project casts light on the intellectual climate of the time. The fact that he was one of the first to recognize the importance of B03, but did not have a lasting impact on text-critical scholarship, indicates that he was a pioneer who correctly estimated the importance of this one manuscript, but worked in isolation.

Zusammenfassung

Granville Penn (1761-1844) war ein autodidaktischer Textkritiker, der die Absicht hatte, die englische Übersetzung des Neuen Testaments zu revidieren. Dabei hat er hauptsächlich Beweise für seine Argumente im Codex Vaticanus (B03) gefunden. Schon im 19. Jh. war seine Arbeit weitgehend vergessen, aber sie liefert Beweise dafür, dass die Handschrift B03 wissenschaftlich in zunehmendem Ausmaß positiv bewertet wurde. Penns zahlreiche Vermutungen zeigen einen interessanten Zugang zu seiner Methode und sein Überarbeitungsprojekt wirft Licht auf das intellektuelle Klima seiner Zeit. Dass Penn einer der ersten Gelehrten war, der die Bedeutung von B03 erkannte, wenngleich ohne langfristigen Einfluss auf die textkritischen Forscher, beweist, dass er ein Pionier mit klarem Blick für die Qualität des Manuskriptes war, der aber in völliger Abgeschlossenheit daran arbeitete.

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