

The Elements of New Testament Greek, by J. W. Wenham. Cambridge University Press, 1965, pp. xi and 268; 18s. 6d.

Mr Wenham, who is Vice-Principal of Tyndale Hall, Bristol, began his task with the attempt to revise Nunn's *Elements of New Testament Greek*. This was a book of whose soundness he was convinced, but thirteen years of teaching from it showed that it could be improved. He finished by writing practically a new book.

He has done this most sensibly. Having taught beginners myself for an even longer period, I have been on the look-out for the pitfalls and have not found a single place where these have not been guarded against. Everything has also been rigidly cut down to the essentials, though naturally there is room for debate as to where the exact dividing line comes. A good example of this process is in the vocabularies. Few words occurring less than twenty times have been included, and few occurring more than thirty have been omitted. The book could well be used by people wanting to teach themselves. A key to the exercises can be bought separately, though the price is not given.

There are good indices, both in Greek and in English. Frequent illustrations in the vocabularies of Greek words derived from English will both help the student's memory and provide him with interesting information. The disadvantage arising from the necessity of learning tenses and declensions piecemeal is redeemed by summary tables at the end, and there is a bibliography to lead the student on to fuller study. The author reckons that the book can be mastered in a year. I would be inclined to think that most beginners would take rather longer, unless they could give a great deal of time to it and did not find Greek too difficult. However long they take, they will be well repaid.

I have noted very few blemishes, and 'blemishes' is perhaps too strong a word. Mr Wenham deliberately omits all accents as irrelevant for the beginner. Agreed, but perhaps there is an advantage in his becoming familiar with the look of them, though he can be told to ignore them. Differentiating accents are rightly included, and a further one would help on p. 101 to distinguish between an indicative and an imperative. The contracted forms of *pleiōn* are not given on p. 120. That is perhaps oversimplification, as they occur quite frequently—ten times as against sixteen for this particular word, and occasionally for comparatives on the same model.

On p. 128 the sentence 'Only the words in heavy type need to be learnt' is a little misleading. The heavy type indicates irregular forms which need special attention, but, as is noted on the next page, the regular forms are common as well.

But these are minimal points. Translators wanting to learn Greek will find the book clear, interesting, helpful and reliable.

H. K. MOULTON

A Beginner's Reader-Grammar for New Testament Greek, Ernest Cadman Colwell in collaboration with Ernest W. Tune. Harper and Row, New York, 1965, \$3.75.

Greek is not one of the more difficult languages, at any rate in its elementary stages. It compares favourably with, say, Chinese, Tamil or Tongan. Its spelling is much simpler than English or French.

Yet theological students by and large regard it as a bugbear, a necessary chore for academic purposes, to be forgotten promptly on leaving college.

Anything that can be done to change this attitude of mind is highly desirable. The future Bible translator often regrets that his Greek has gone, or that it never came. Mr Wenham's 'Elements of New Testament Greek', reviewed above, should prove most helpful to beginners. Dr Colwell and his colleague also aim at the same constituency, using different methods which they have tested successfully in their own classes.

The aim of the book is to help the student to proceed as quickly as possible to actual reading. This is the ultimate aim of learning Greek, but learners are often bored by grammar before they get to reading. The authors cut this period to almost nil. The reader learns his grammar and vocabulary from actual reading and from the copious use of Arndt and Gringrich's edition of Bauer's *Lexicon*.

The book cannot be used without a teacher. 'Its major reliance is upon the contribution which the teacher will make in the classroom' (p. 15), and there are two pages of special suggestions to the teacher. No noun declensions are printed. A table of the regular forms of the verb is given at the end, but the student is urged to avoid it 'like the plague' until he has learned the system of 'identifiers' presented earlier in the book. These are sensible methods of recognizing augments, tense stems, terminations, etc., so as to find the root to look up in the dictionary.

It will be seen that this book will not serve the purpose of a lonely translator out in the jungle. For the rest, we have the authors' word that the method works, and that is the essential requirement.

A little facetiousness here and there, particularly in the illustrations, is not very helpful. The words of John 3: 21, referring to the coming of Jesus from heaven, are attached to a person coming down on a parachute. That could well be removed. Nor is the price helpful for a book of only 111 pages, the first four of which are occupied by titles, etc.

H. K. MOULTON

An Expanded Paraphrase of the Epistles of Paul, by F. F. Bruce. The Pater-
noster Press, 1965, pp. 323; 25s. 0d.

Professor Bruce, now Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis in Manchester University, adds to his stature with each new publication. His scholarship is soundness itself, conservative on the whole but never obscurantist, and anything he writes can be guaranteed to have been thoroughly studied and carefully weighed.

He has put his gifts at the disposal of translators (though he does not write with them particularly in mind) in his latest book, which has grown out of Bible study talks to a young people's holiday conference, followed up in *The Evangelical Quarterly* over a period of years by paraphrases of all the Pauline epistles. This work is now collected in one volume.

Professor Bruce's method is to print on the left-hand page the English Revised Version of 1881, as the version 'which reproduces most accurately the nuances of Greek grammar and follows the idiom of the original as closely