

**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.

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**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.