

## BREVIA.

“**Introduction to Biblical Hebrew.**”<sup>1</sup>—The stimulus imparted to the study of Hebrew by the current Old Testament controversies is very remarkable. One sign of this widespread activity is the quantity of new grammars, especially elementary ones, that keep constantly appearing. In this department of the publishing trade the proverb is true that “it never rains but it pours.” What is surprising and creditable is, that the majority of these grammars are useful, some of them to learners and all of them to teachers. Though destined for the pupils, we imagine that Mr. Kennedy’s work will find its largest and most appreciative public among the instructors. Intended for beginners, the exposition does not follow a scientific arrangement, but deals with the subject in an order dictated by practical convenience. This is on the whole well managed, but there is a little unnecessary overlapping and excess of elaboration, particularly in the preliminary matter. On the other hand, the initial difficulties of learners are better apprehended and met than in most elementary text-books. We instance the careful description of the powers of the consonants, the method of transliteration (excepting the symbol selected for Aleph), the statement of the meaning of technical grammatical names, and especially the early series of introductory exercises, with full transliteration, interpretation, references, and notes. A feature of this book is the copious system of exercises attached to each section, consisting of Hebrew and English sentences illustrative of the principles in question. Whether it is wise to impose much translation from English into Hebrew in the early stages of training, and whether in the later pupils do not get sick of fragmentary sentences, are points worth the consideration of practical trainers and text-book makers. In any case Mr. Kennedy’s labour of love in collecting together such comprehensive and convenient examples of every rule and idiom will be gratefully acknowledged by teachers, and by independent students—especially if he goes on to publish a key. As it is, his pertinent and frequent notes on the exercises already make these very useful to learners working without an instructor. Superiorities over exist-

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew.* By James Kennedy, B.D. (London : Williams & Norgate.)

ing books are the introduction of the main contents of practical syntax, the aid afforded to the mind through the eye by judicious spacing, the free employment of subordinate titles and of leaded type to mark the essential kernel of a paragraph, and generally the excellent and accurate printing, though sprung vowels and errata are by no means quite absent. Were this the place for discussion, we should take exception to Mr. Kennedy's use of the terms *Mutables* and *Aspirates*, his transliteration of the short vowels and *Hatephs*, his exposition of the *Construct*, and several points in his treatment of the verbs. In the Table of Vowel Signs the position of *Holem* is badly represented, and *Sheva* ought to have been printed in all three columns, while a very awkward misprint on p. 2 represents Hebrew as written from left to right. The book is manifestly the outcome of a long and loving industry, based on a scientific apprehension of the language, and shaped by actual experience in teaching. With its admirable simplicity of statement, and profusion of illustrative material, it may be consulted with advantage even by the experienced teacher.

W. G. ELMSLIE.

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