sight into the age and into the personalities and concerns of the literate upper classes whose lives they themselves recorded – often self-consciously – for posterity.

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Collected Works of Erasmus, Volume 5, The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 594 to 841 (1517 to 1518), translated by R.A.B. Mynors and D.F.S. Thompson, annotated by Peter G. Bietenholz. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1979. Pp. xvii, 461. \$35.00.

"I have moved to Louvain, waiting to discover what will be the most suitable refuge for the old age which knocks at my door and indeed now presses close upon me" (Ep. 596). Thus at age 50 or thereabouts Erasmus announced his arrival at Louvain in early July, 1517. He sojourned there for almost ten months – until late April, 1518, when he went to Basle in order to supervise printing of the second edition of his Greek New Testament – and this volume of the *Collected Works of Erasmus* presents in splendid English translation the 247 surviving items of Erasmus' correspondence stemming from that period.

This was a time of consolidation in Erasmus' life. He had already published many of his most important works – the *Adages*, for example, the *Praise of Folly*, and the first edition of the Greek New Testament – and the controversies of the Reformation had not yet begun to disturb his scholarly and literary activity. Martin Luther's name does not even occur yet in Erasmus' correspondence, though his existence is alluded to in two letters, Ep. 711 from George Spalatin to Erasmus and Ep. 785 from Erasmus to Thomas More. In the period covered by this volume, Erasmus published new works and engaged in a certain amount of controversy; but behind these developments one sees in this volume his emergence as a sort of elder European statesman, witness the breadth and tempo of his correspondence. Letters arrived from all corners and were written for all purposes. Paschasius Berselius addressed Erasmus timorously for a simple reason: to make his name known to the great man (cf. Ep. 674). On a more exalted level, Erasmus entertained the invitations of Christendom's most eminent men during the period covered in this volume. Guillaume Budé and Francis I wanted Erasmus to settle in Paris. Cardinal Wolsey and Henry VIII offered him a position in England. Cardinal Ximénez invited him to Spain. Bishop Christoph von Utenheim tried to lure him to Basle, while Bishop Philip of Burgundy wanted to gain him for Utrecht. Other notables requested the pleasure of his company on a visit, if not on a permanent basis (cf. Ep. 809).

Meanwhile, Erasmus complained about his health. Perhaps the most frequent theme struck in his own letters is his physical fragility. He stood at death's door, or so he thought, when he entered Louvain. Later he was laid low by a rheum. All through the period covered here he informed correspondents that he had begun the last act of his comedy. For an indisposed man, however, he accomplished an impressive amount of work. His correspondence reveals his involvement in myriad activities of small, medium, and large importance. He attempted to make peace between Thomas More and Germain de Brie, lately at odds with each other

and soon to be opponents in literary battle (Ep. 620). He took time to support a student at Louvain for a disputed benefice (Ep. 761, 762). He constantly sought help obtaining income due from his own benefices. He sent Thomas More a set of "Conclusions on Papal pardons," otherwise known as the Ninety-five Theses (Ep. 785). He worked actively on behalf of the newly established Trilingual College, particularly in seeking competent and prestigious instructors of Greek and Latin (Epp. 686, 691, 699, 778, 804, 805). He consoled his friend Gerardus Listrius, maliciously and wrongly accused of having poisoned his late enemy, Johannes Murmellius (Epp. 697, 838). He undertook a piece of sensitive business, which he unfortunately did not see fit to identify, for the Emperor, Maximilian I (Ep. 669, 670).

The unifying thread of Erasmus' sojourn at Louvain, however, was his literary and scholarly work. His correspondence represents him laboring on an astonishing number of projects. During his ten months in Louvain, he completed editions of Quintus Curtius and Suetonius; translations of Theodore Gaza's Greek grammar and Plutarch's moral treatises; and new editions of several of his own publications, including the *Adages*, epistles, *Institutio principis christiani*, and the *Enchiridion*. Original works that Erasmus first published in this period include the *Querela pacis*, the *Paraphrase* on the Epistle to the Romans, the *Ratio verae theologiae*, and the *Apologia* to Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples. Furthermore, he helped get Thomas More's *Utopia* and *Epigrams* through Froben's press.

Finally, there was the most important of all Erasmus' scholarly projects – the edition of the New Testament. Erasmus had expressed dissatisfaction with the first edition almost as soon as it appeared, in 1516. He began right away to consult additional Greek manuscripts, including several from the Low Countries. The monastery of Agnietenberg (near Zwolle) supplied him with a manuscript of the gospels; Cuthbert Tunstall helped him collate another manuscript; and the Augustinians at Corsendonck (near Turnhout) provided a codex of the gospels, Acts, and the apostolic epistles. These manuscripts are best known through Erasmus' other works, not his letters, and one can only lament the fact that he did not speak more fully and frankly about them in his correspondence, where information is skimpy indeed (cf. Epp. 504, 515, 597). In his epistles he spoke generally of the intensity of his labor rather than his specific discoveries or opinions of his materials. He called himself a "slave of the New Testament" (Ep. 658) and said he was "devoted entirely" to his work on it (Ep. 682). The finished product, to be dedicated like the first edition to Pope Leo X, he promised would lend eternal luster to the reputation of the House of Medici (Epp. 649, 658). In order to understand Erasmus' scholarship, however, one must proceed beyond his correspondence and study his apologetic works and especially his *Annotations* on the New Testament.

The New Testament, of course, did not meet with universal approval. Erasmus' efforts were basically approved by those men whose opinions he most respected – More, Colet, Budé, etc. – but others harbored serious reservations about his critical scholarship and its implications. John Eck spoke for many of them early in 1518, when he opened an extremely important but under-studied debate with Erasmus (Ep. 769). Eck objected specifically to three passages in Erasmus' *Annotations* to the New Testament, but his complaint embodied broad

implications for biblical scholarship. Eck charged Erasmus with treating the New Testament as a human document instead of inspired revelation. Indeed, Erasmus had suggested at Matt. 2:6 that the evangelist inaccurately cited the Hebrew scriptures; at Acts 10:38 that the apostles learned their Greek in the streets, not the academies; and at Matt. 4:23 that the evangelists occasionally made mistakes of usage. Eck argued to the contrary that the scriptures were divinely inspired and unblemished by error. In his reply (Ep. 844, to be translated in the sixth volume of the *Collected Works of Erasmus*) Erasmus agreed that the New Testament was an inspired document, but defended his *Annotations* and insisted on the necessity of critical philological scholarship in the tradition of St. Jerome. The scriptures were inspired by God, he said, but committed to writing by fallible men, transmitted through the ages by men, and inevitably corrupted in the process. They must therefore be subjected to scholarly analysis like any other human document if they are to be correctly understood and appreciated. Thus Eck and Erasmus addressed themselves to one of the enduring questions of biblical scholarship: to what extent are the scriptures susceptible to criticism that stands on non-scriptural foundations and employs extra-scriptural methods of analysis?

Other controversies also infringed on Erasmus' time during his residence in Louvain. The early days of his sojourn found him complaining often of Jean Briselot and unnamed Carmelites who failed to appreciate his *Praise of Folly* (Epp. 597, 627, 628, 641). Toward the end of his stay he opened correspondence with Edward Lee (Ep. 765), soon to become a captious and persistent, if not particularly erudite, critic of Erasmus' New Testament and *Annotations*. Throughout his ten months in Louvain Erasmus' correspondence was filled with rumblings of the Reuchlin controversy. The affair was not one that appealed to Erasmus – for a long time he attempted to avoid expressing his opinion to openly – but eventually the stakes rose so high that Erasmus realized he could not stand above the quarrel. His views on the matter do not always place him in best light, but they reveal the tensions he must have felt with respect to the matter. On the one hand, Erasmus thought Reuchlin dabbled too much in Hebrew esoterica of little importance for Christians; but on the other, he resented the interference of Jacob van Hoogstraten and his fellow Dominicans at Cologne in literary and scholarly matters that they did not understand. He scorned the *Epistolae obscurorum virorum* and made it plain that he did not appreciate having his name associated with the work; but in his own letters he reviled Reuchlin's opponents in some of the most abusive language that survives from Erasmus' pen. He became especially agitated at Reuchlin's principal critic, the converted Jew, Johann Pfefferkorn, and in his letters he raked the man in a rather ugly way over some burning anti-semitic coals. Pfefferkorn was “a Jew and a half” and “an angel of Satan,” according to Erasmus (Ep. 694); “a rascally Jew” and “the devil's spawn” (Ep. 700); “Satan's true lieutenant” and “a brazen mountebank” (Ep. 701); and a host of other things equally unflattering. Erasmus would prefer to “see the entire Old Testament done away with than to see the peace of Christendom torn to ribbons for the sake of the Jewish scriptures” (Ep. 701). Erasmus turned down the role of chief defender for Reuchlin, but he could not decline to answer the challenge he perceived to humanist scholarship in particular and the *bonae litterae* in general.

One last controversy engaged Erasmus directly in his own defense while he resided at Louvain in 1517 and 1518 – his dispute with Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples over the interpretation and translation of Heb. 2:7. Erasmus took no pleasure in his public quarrel with Lefèvre: he respected Lefèvre's work in general, appreciated his contributions to humanist studies, and feared that a bitter controversy would benefit those who sought to destroy the humanists' new brand of scholarship. Yet Erasmus saw little choice but to go public with the dispute. In his Latin translation of the New Testament, he had rendered the verse in question according to the Greek text: "You have made his [Jesus] a little lower than the angels." Lefèvre preferred to bypass the Greek and translate according to the Hebrew text at Ps. 8:6 – "You have made him a little lower than God" – which indeed the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was citing at Heb. 2:7. In explaining his position, Lefèvre said some harsh things about Erasmus' views in the second edition of his translation and commentary on the Pauline epistles, and the hypersensitive Erasmus considered himself accused of blasphemy and heresy. He could never endure a slight, and while in Louvain, he dwelled more than a little on the issue. He dispatched many letters explaining his position and seeking the support of fellow humanists (Epp. 730-734), as well as searching for a speedy resolution that would leave the two principals on good terms (Epp. 724, 778, 814). Eventually a reconciliation was effected, but only after Lefèvre tacitly acknowledged defeat.

As always, Erasmus' correspondence is entertaining. Even the staid, scholarly Guillaume Budé takes on a human aspect, dashing off Ep. 609 as his dinner grows cool on the table. Many of Erasmus' own letters were almost calculated to intrigue the reader or to catch his imagination. Erasmus denies having the time or inclination to have written the *Julius exclusus* (Epp. 622, 636), for example, without denying that he in fact wrote it. He paints a picture of a petty Alexander the Great, drunken, ambitious, and rash, whose example must be avoided, not followed (Ep. 704). He defends the *Praise of Folly* and judges it suitable even for schoolchildren (Ep. 749). He lashes out at critics of his New Testament – those who "befoul the names of honest men with their slimy, venomous tongues" – in a passionate defense of humanist scholarship (Ep. 809).

This most recent volume of the *Collected Works of Erasmus* clearly lives up to the standards of its predecessors – no small achievement – and for this the translators and editor are to be highly commended. The translation is quite simply excellent – crisp, clear, idiomatic, straightforward, and sensitive to the original text – as excerpts quoted above testify. I checked translations of several important, substantive letters against Allen's Latin edition; others who do likewise will share my admiration for the literary accomplishment of R.A.B. Mynors and D.F.S. Thompson. The annotation to this volume goes beyond that of Allen's edition. Peter Bietenholz significantly re-dates four letters (Epp. 660, 692, 705, and 733 in Allen's edition; 1013 A, 480 A, 902 A, and 704 A, respectively, in the *Collected Works of Erasmus*), and he makes slight adjustments in the dating of many other pieces of correspondence. In the case of two letters (Epp. 749, 792), he offers fresh considerations bearing on the identity of Erasmus' unnamed correspondents. Finally, in many places where Allen did not think it necessary, Bietenholz has noted Erasmus' allusions and citations from classical literature and his own

works. This is an especially welcome feature of the annotation, since Erasmus' correspondence is liberally studded with proverbs and *bons mots* derived from his *Adages*, many of which could otherwise go unrecognized. The present volume of the *Collected Works of Erasmus* thus offers elegant translations and impressive scholarship. The collaborators are to be congratulated.

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Barbara Kiefer Lewalski. *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979. Pp. XIV, 536. \$27.50.

This book is so erudite and thoughtfully executed that it is difficult to find fault with its parts. Our only argument can be with its general avowedly "revisionist" judgment on a vast body of seventeenth-century English lyrics that Lewalski calls "Protestant."

Lewalski's central thesis is that there existed in seventeenth-century England and New England a "mode" of Protestant meditation springing from the Reformation habit of examining the experience of the individual Christian life as a regenerative pilgrimage and of measuring the success of this pilgrimage according to its conformity to Biblical type. The meditative "mode" consisted in applying the significance of Biblical history to the "self" to find out how the self's pilgrimage to the Christian eternity was faring. The meditator was usually motivated by a concern with personal individual Calvinist "regeneration" from the general original fall of man. The meditator's method was gleaned from Biblical typology as he examined the nature of nature in the light of the revealed "Word," and as he also contemplated his own spiritual life in the light of the Word's historical manifestations. This meditative "mode" began to develop in England with the Biblically-inspired religious lyrics of Coverdale and Wyatt early in the sixteenth century. It developed simultaneously in prayer and in poetry, though its first real incontestable appearance in verse occurred only with Donne early in the seventeenth century. Strongly influenced by the pictorial techniques, the symbols and the abstracts figures of emblems and by the exegetical and experiential aims of Protestant sermon-writing, the meditative "mode" in verse was repeated among a number of poets whose aesthetics it fundamentally came to define. These poets after Donne, writes Lewalski, were the British George Herbert, Henry Vaughan and Thomas Traherne and, finally, the New England American Edward Taylor, with whom the Protestant poetics died out.

Lewalski's work is a massive piece of scholarship that requires several readings to encompass. Its preliminary first chapter describes the origin of the English Protestant *furor poeticus* in a Reformation "paradigm of Salvation." The first major part of the work then discusses how this poetic inspiration found its support in the "genre theory," "poetic texture" and "symbolic mode" of the Bible. Its second major part puts this tri-partite scriptural context within the more particular literary context of lyric, emblem and sermon. The third and final major part of the work applies Lewalski's findings of both these Biblical and literary contexts to the five poets in whom the Protestant meditative lyric lived and died.