Hilmar M. Pabel and Mark Vessey, eds. *Holy Scripture Speaks: The Production and Reception of Erasmus' Paraphrases on the New Testament*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002. Pp. xvi, 400.

Five of the twelve contributors to this collection are editors or translators of the *Paraphrases* in the Collected Works of Erasmus. As the title suggests, the collection is divided into two parts, with seven essays analysing characteristics and contents of the texts Erasmus produced, and five discussing the texts' reception, mainly in France and England.

As Mark Vessey says, the *Paraphrases* were Erasmus' means of making the New Testament an "active . . . presence" in the lives of his fellow Christians; they were designed to "give rhetorical force to . . . scriptural truth" (p. 48). The paraphrases elucidate, amplify, and underscore the meaning for Christian life of the New Testament texts in correct and eloquent Latin that could bring the message home to educated readers of Erasmus' day. Mechtilde O'Mara's essay shows how Erasmus brought references to Roman cultural practices such as triumphs and trophies into his paraphrase, in order to make Paul's meanings clearer and more vivid for Latin readers.

Most of the essays in the "production" half are related to issues of voice, persona or character. Vessey refers to Erasmus' most famous persona, Folly, and to the critique of the ill-governed tongue in *Lingua* in exploring the problem of creating voices for the paraphrases that would be expansive and emotive, yet not uncontrolled. The paraphrast's distinctive strategy is to assume the voice or persona of the original author. Jane E. Phillips argues that Erasmus took this task seriously, showing how he makes the speaker of his paraphrase of Luke sound like a physician and an historian, traditional aspects of Luke's identity. Robert D. Sider analyses the portrayal of Paul, showing that "preaching lies at the heart of Paul's apostolate in the *Paraphrases*" (p. 95) and that Paul's concerns and characteristics are ones his paraphrast shared. (One is reminded of Jacques Chomarat's analysis of the *Paraphrases*' Christ in the first *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* [1981].) Bernard Roussel compares Erasmus to other sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Scripture paraphrasts, demonstrating that all seriously intend to represent their original faithfully, but all differ from one another according to their confessional backgrounds. Irena Backus argues that Erasmus makes Jesus' family members models of important aspects of Christian living; like Chomarat, but for her own reasons, Backus finds the *Paraphrases*' Jesus unappealing as a literary character. The final essay on "production," by Hilmar M. Pabel, has a more purely doctrinal focus on Erasmus' views of marriage and divorce.

The section on "reception" starts with the vicissitudes Erasmus' texts underwent in the printing shop. John J. Bateman reaches the sobering conclusion that "at no time would a reader find a text of the *Paraphrases on the Epistles* in the form that Erasmus truly wanted" (p. 255). In one of the most

broadly appealing essays, Erika Rummel explains “Why Noël Béda Did Not Like Erasmus’ *Paraphrases*.” This is a very good look at the “Scholastic/Humanist controversy” from the Scholastic side. The Paris theologians’ eventual condemnation of the *Paraphrases* presaged their later fate. Guy Bedouelle shows that the major French translation of 1563 was put forward as suggesting a medial position between Catholic and Protestant extremes; but it was moderate Protestants who were offering this suggestion. In successive editions under Edward VI, the English *Paraphrases* were given an increasingly Protestant slant. Gretchen E. Minton considers why the English chose not to use a text by John Bale to supply a paraphrase for Revelation (omitted by Erasmus). John Craig surveys English parish records to see whether the royal injunctions were followed that mandated the placing of a copy of the *Paraphrases* in every parish church. His conclusion is “that the ‘Protestant’ Erasmus of the English *Paraphrases* was indeed a durable presence in the parishes” (p. 336). Craig starts his essay with two provocative pages asking (and guessing) why there has been little study of Erasmian influence in England in recent decades. Craig’s essay implicitly perhaps refutes one of the rationales for this neglect: Erasmianism has been put aside as a merely elite phenomenon by social historians interested in the experience of the non-elite majority. Yet if Craig is right, the *Paraphrases* came “down” into the parishes and might have formed part of that experience. Erasmus’ impact on sixteenth-century English religion has been both over- and under-estimated; more work is needed to find the right assessment.

These essays engage special topics, but most have implications that should interest all students of Erasmus. The quality of the scholarship is uniformly high. The book clearly advances beyond previous work on the *Paraphrases* — and there are many more areas to explore.

JOHN F. MCDIARMID, *New College of Florida*

John Donne. *Essayes in Divinity, Being Several Disquisitions Interwoven with Meditations and Prayers*. Ed. Anthony Raspa. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001. Pp. lxxx, 216.

Essayes in Divinity (1651) is a remarkably revealing work for Donne scholars. Written after the composition of the Holy Sonnets (conventionally dated 1609–10) and shortly before he was ordained a clergyman in 1615, the *Essayes* probably provides a clearer and more straightforward account of the religious views of the man, John Donne, than anything else he wrote, apart from a few letters to his most intimate friends, such as Henry Goodyer. As a preacher, Donne would have been very aware that his sermons represented the Estab-