

pursuits into exhorting, cajoling, pleading, defending his honor, or simply engaging in playful banter. No one interested in the early modern period in general and humanists in particular should ignore this superbly fashioned volume.

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*Collected Works of Erasmus. Volume 56: Annotations on Romans.* Trans. & Annotated by John B. Payne, et.al. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994. ISBN 0-8020-0536-5. Pp. xviii+480.

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Volume 56 of *Collected Works of Erasmus* is an annotated translation of Erasmus's *Annotations*—a triumph of scholarship twice over. In the true spirit of the great humanist, those who worked on this part of the formidable Erasmus Corpus have almost outdone their master. Not only did the translators have to contend with the subtleties of Erasmus's original *Annotations*, but they also had to examine all of the five editions which he published between 1516 and 1535, carefully noting the changes he made and bringing them together in one critical text. In addition, the translators/annotators undertook to explain literary and historical allusions and to identify the numerous references Erasmus made to biblical, patristic, medieval and classical sources. Obviously, such a monumental undertaking required the combined resources of a team of four scholars who, in addition, called on a host of other skilled support—gratefully acknowledged in the Translators' Note.

The end product is a superb volume of 480 pages. To retain the flavor of the *Annotations on Romans*, as Erasmus intended them, the translators give Erasmus's Latin text and its English translation as well as the text of the Vulgate, again carefully translated. Equally helpful to serious scholars of the volume are the Greek references Erasmus included in his annotations which again have been translated into English. Thus a clear picture emerges of the carefully nuanced meanings of the text without forcing the reader to Latin and Greek dictionaries. Relegated to footnotes, rather than endnotes, are clarifications and/or editorial comments and, of course, the variations found in subsequent Erasmus editions of this work.

Anyone who may have had doubts about Erasmus's erudition in matters philological will have these dispelled at once. Furthermore, diligent readers will be rewarded by the profound theological insights Erasmus brought to the annotations of one of St. Paul's most significant epistles as he proceeded to translate the Greek text at his disposal into Latin. If in the sixteenth century the work was accessible only to scholars who had mastered Latin, Erasmus is now at the disposal of anyone who can afford to purchase the volume, thanks to the meticulous scholarship of the translators and annotators.

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