

The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 594-841 (1517-1518)

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✓ Verified Book of The Correspondence of Erasmus: Letters 594-841 (1517-1518)

Summary:

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This volume covers the first ten months of Erasmus' residence at Louvain. He lived during this time in the College of the Lily, his position presitgious and secure. he was a member of the theological faculty, yet free of regular academic duties and entitled to receive a regular income more than adequate to his modest needs. His predominant task in the course of these months was the re-editing of the New Testament, which he considered his magnum opus: through his work on the New Testament the use he made of his time and talent would be judged by God and man alike. There are frequent references in the letters to the long and arduous hours devoted to the annotation of these volumes. As a release from the drudgery of annotation he tried his hand at paraphrases of the gospels, gave Ratio verae theologiae its final form, and allowed himself a little time in the company of classical authors who refreshed his mind and refurbished his style.

As never before, Erasmus' name counted now among the educated and powerful of the age, and he was overwhelmed with invitations from every corner of Europe. He was developing influential friends across Europe, and in Germany especially he gained enthusiastic admirers who expected him to join in the defence of Johann Reuchlin and made certain that he became promptly acquainted with the Ninety-five Theses of Luther whose name Erasmus at first still had trouble remembering.

This volume is of particular interest because more than half the letters derive from the Deventer Letter-book, into which Erasmus had his amaneuneses copy incoming and outgoing letters, among them many which were truly private rather than composed with a mind to subsequent publication. As a result we become intimately acquainted with the daily life of Erasmus and his friends, with the domestic pleasures and annoyances, private worries and hopes that made up and continue to make up the substance of human existance.

Volume 5 of the Collected Works of Erasmus series.

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