

'faith in Christ'. But not altogether surprisingly, since the 'faith of Christ' reading fits rather well with her Adam and interchange themes: Christ's faith more than counterbalances Adam's unfaithfulness; and in the interchange of Christ and the Christian, the latter share in the former's faith(fulness). I fear, however, that Professor Hooker has been seduced by her own logic. Precisely in the most explicit Adam/Christ parallel passages, Paul seems deliberately to *avoid* what on her thesis would be the inviting contrast between Adam's unfaith and Christ's faith. Paul's logic is rather that Christian Gentiles are 'sons of Abraham' both by sharing in *Abraham's* faith and by being 'in Christ' or belonging to Christ (Gal. 3.26—9). More, of course needs to be said. But Hooker's is certainly not the last word.

All in all we have here a very good representative selection of the best of Professor Hooker's work on Paul. Her contribution and insights deserve to be given more attention in the ongoing debate about Pauline theology. This collection should help ensure that.

JAMES D.G. DUNN

ERASMUS, by James McConica. *Oxford University Press*, 1991. pp. vi + 106. £4.99

This recent addition to Oxford University Press' 'Past Master Series' provides a concise introduction, aimed at a lay readership, to the intellectual achievements of this leading figure of the northern European Renaissance. McConica is the author of a distinguished series of works relating to the Renaissance, especially in England, allowing the reader to rest assured of the quality of the work. Throughout, McConica's approach is informed and intelligent — for example, note the wise decision, given the extent and diversity of Erasmus' writings, to concentrate upon a few major texts, readily available in English translations.

After a brief overview of Erasmus' career, McConica provides a succinct exposition of his educational views (drawing extensively upon the *Antibarberi* and the *Adagia*). The roots of Erasmus' theological views are developed with reference to his pioneering work in relation to the Greek text of the New Testament, followed by a judicious summary and appraisal of the celebrated *philosophia Christi*—not so much a philosophy, but more a way of life. The vexed question of Erasmus' relation to Luther receives a fair analysis, while a concluding chapter explores the final phase of Erasmus' career, picking up at least some of the concerns of the *Encomium Moriae* (although the discussion of this early work—the first edition of which goes back to 1511—in this final chapter may strike some readers as introducing an unnecessary chronological discontinuity).

The work is unquestionably useful to a lay readership, in that, within a hundred small pages of text, it attempts to condense all that one

might reasonably hope to find said about this leading figure of early modern European culture. Alas, a high price has to be paid for this convenience. Words such as 'brief' and 'concise' must be deployed regularly in describing McConica's exposition of Erasmus's ideas, and the degree of brevity forced upon McConica by the format of the 'Past Masters' series obliges him to truncate debates (e.g., on the nature of humanism in and northern European humanism in particular), or omit highly relevant material which ought to have found its way into the text. Nevertheless, the work is studded with brilliant insights and summaries, in which McConica shows himself to be not merely the master of his historical sources and the secondary literature which attends them, but also possessed of a rare ability to summarize their essence in a few splendid sentences — for example, in his comparison of the approaches of Erasmus and Luther to theology (pp. 78—9).

Perhaps McConica's most significant achievement in this little work is to explain clearly to the lay reader why Erasmus, although merciless in his criticism of the abuses and pretensions of the established church of his day, never felt entirely at home with the Protestant Reformation. Although this aspect of Erasmus' persona is well established in the literature, it has rarely been explained with such clarity. The reader is allowed to gain an understanding of why Erasmus—who saw himself as a mediating figure in an increasingly polarized religious debate—came to be marginalized by both sides. But the present reviewer was left with the impression that Erasmus has perhaps been treated too generously. More critical studies have often highlighted Erasmus' often unrealistic attitudes, and cast him in the role of an armchair warrior, steeped in classical learning yet isolated from the harsh realities of everyday life. McConica does not succeed in disinvesting this impression of Erasmus, if, indeed, he ever intended to do so. Perhaps the reason why Erasmus slayed his thousands, and Luther his tens of thousands, lay in the latter's closer pastoral contact with the everyday world.

ALISTER MCGRATH

EARLY CHRISTIANITY, Edited by Ian Hazlett, *S.P.C.K.* London, pp. 294, price £14.99.

This collection of very useful and at times very challenging essays appears as a book designed to do honour to W.H.C.Frend, 'the distinguished British historian of the early Church.' The editor has put the reader further in his debt by furnishing at the end a list of Professor Frend's numerous publications together with a 'conspectus of early church history' in the form of a date line.

The contributors to this volume represent all this best in modern British patristic scholarship. The preface, short but characteristically