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## BOOK REVIEW CUTTING

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Y. M. C. A. PUBLISHING HOUSE.

**Church and State**, BY KARL BARTH: Translated by  
G. RONALD HOWE: S. C. M. Press, London, pp. 90:  
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The problem of the Church and the State was answered by the Reformation writers—Calvin, Zwingli and Luther. On scriptural basis they asserted that there is no conflict between the two realms. Barth inquires—is this all that there is to be said. From his investigation of New Testament writings, he establishes a more positive and inseparable connection between the two. The exegesis is elaborate. Pilate claimed "power" over Jesus and Jesus admitted it. In crucifying the Lord, Pilate was the middleman acting in the name of paganism. In so doing he declares the solidarity of paganism with the sin of Israel entitling it to the inheritance of the promise made to Israel. Going into several of the references in the apostolic writings Barth writes: "That power, the State as such, belongs originally and ultimately to Jesus Christ: that in its comparatively independent substance, in its dignity, its function and its purpose it should serve the person and the work of Jesus Christ and therefore the justification of the sinner." If the State becomes 'demonic' which need not necessarily be—it is not so much by an unwarrantable assumption of autonomy—as by the loss of its legitimate, relative independence. So clever an exegesis as this attributes to the organised State functions which would be a large claim even for the larger life of which the State is but an expression. How would the thesis fit into conditions where people lead a peaceful community life without the paraphernalia of the State?

Deductions from this follow easily for the learned author. The description of the order of the new age is that of a *political* order—the Kingdom of God. It is not the real church but the real city that is spoken of in the new day. Hence the earthly Church stands over against the earthly State as a sojourning and not as a State within the State or as State above the State. On earth the Church needs freedom for its work. Since this can be guaranteed only by the State, therefore, there is no alternative but that the Church should on its side guarantee the existence of the State through its prayers. On the topic "Subjection to the powers," Barth has an interesting discourse which is highly doctrinaire. One cannot help getting the feeling from this book, that Barth comes perilously near deification of the State and if the Church exists, it is not to challenge another divinely ordained institution but to act as a corrective when and if it goes wrong and certainly the Church should be the preserver of the State. But if a State is based upon a conception totally devoid of moral instinct, but upon force and greed, what may its

authority be upon the people? But then Barth is not averse to force—though on the usual of familiar grounds.