

1 REVIEW

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barth communication by Christ issuing in the projection of a visual image is worthy of serious consideration but does not press his case too hard. This is a reverent, stimulating, and suggestive book, the kind of Christian apologetic which is badly needed to-day.

Space allows me little more than a mention of Professor John Knox's book, *The Death of Christ* (Collins, 12s. 6d.). I will only say that it is one of the most challenging that I have read in a long time. Conclusions that had seemed to me relatively secure about Jesus' own understanding of his death are radically questioned. At the same time a quite splendid declaration of faith arises out of the ashes left by the fire of criticism. Knox has a beautifully clear style and represents some of the best qualities of American New Testament scholarship. One does not need to accept all his conclusions to recognize the fairness and the sincerity of his arguments.

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FROM SWITZERLAND

"THIS letter is the principal part of the New Testament and the purest gospel." So wrote Luther in his introduction to Romans; and, although Brunner rightly corrects him by pointing out that the Gospels are the principal part of the New Testament, yet the Epistle to the Romans has a decisive if different importance. Here the whole Christian Gospel, not just the life of Jesus, is presented in a closely argued and challenging form, and this Epistle is the nearest approach to a systematic theology that the New Testament provides. Whoever undertakes a commentary on this book must penetrate to the heart of Paul's thought and must grasp it as a whole.

Just as it was through the Epistle to the Romans that Luther sounded the trumpet which led to the sixteenth-century Reformation, so also Karl Barth, through his great commentary on Romans, the first edition of which was published in 1918, recalled theologians from a tepid modernism to stand under the Word of God in the Holy Scriptures. Since then, although Barth has modified some of his old positions, the movement which he inaugurated has grown in numbers and importance. The appearance of *A Shorter Commentary on Romans* (S.C.M., 15s.) by Barth is therefore of exceptional interest, especially as it coincides with a commentary on the same epistle by Brunner (Lutterworth, 21s.), his former disciple who has become one of his most notable theological opponents. Yet these two commentaries are comparatively old works. Brunner's was first published in the German language in 1938. Although Barth's was not actually published until 1956 in German, it is based on lectures which he gave in Basle in 1940.

These two commentaries are very modest in size compared with the inordinately long volumes which continental theologians have the reputation of writing. Barth's "shorter" commentary runs to only 184 pages, while Brunner's is a mere 130 pages. Moreover, Brunner's work includes the Revised Standard Version of the text, so that the commentary itself is very condensed, and at times somewhat slight. On the whole, Brunner confines himself to giving the sense of each section and the main drift of Paul's argument. However, he adds a most useful appendix which gives the main meanings of Paul's more important theological words. Barth's commentary is much more of an exercise