

Protestant Thought: From Rousseau to Ritschl. By Karl Barth. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959. 435 pages. \$7.00.

BA 1249

This is a translation of selected chapters from a larger treatise by Karl Barth on "Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century." It gives another side to the greatest dogmatician of this century, for it shows Barth as a very competent and sympathetic historian of theological thought. The book comes out of a first-hand acquaintance with the writings of the great theological thinkers of the last century. Despite his own dogmatic bias, Barth is able to enter sympathetically, as any historian should, into the thought-world of his subjects. His criticisms and assessments are valuable for insights into the permanent contributions of thinkers like Kant, Hegel, Feuerbach, Schleiermacher, and Ritschl. They also help to illuminate Barth's own mind and enable us to understand the "new Barth" of the great series of Church Dogmatics. The reviewer found the chapters on Kant, Schleiermacher, and Ritschl particularly enriching. It is doubtful that there can be found anywhere else such a rich analysis of the theological thought of the nineteenth century. This is a "must" for all interested in the roots of contemporary theological thinking and in Barth himself.

E. C. Rust

Review of Expositor
Apr. 1963