

**F. WILLIAMS**

The Experienced Piano, Organ,  
and Harmonium  
Tuner and Repairer,  
33 Bradshaw Street,  
DUNEDIN.

**"THE WAY LEPERS LOOK."**

"I did not know that was the way lepers look. Their faces are so happy looking," remarked a lady visitor recently at one of our Leper Homes in China.

"Some of the marred, disfigured faces shine with Heaven's own light," comments the missionary in charge, who adds: "As she meets those outside she will see a tremendous difference."

Only those who have witnessed the utter misery and wretchedness of homeless, destitute lepers in regions where the disease is prevalent can really appreciate how great is the change that takes place in the spiritual, physical, and social condition of those who find refuge in a Christian home.

Our present responsibilities are heavy. In our own and aided Homes there are over 11,500 lepers and children. But there are "THOSE OUTSIDE"! It would make a "tremendous difference" to them if they could be reached and helped.

GIFTS TO ENABLE US TO HELP  
MORE OF THESE NEEDY ONES  
WILL BE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED.  
Donations may be sent to the

N.Z. SECRETARY,  
THE MISSION TO LEPERS,  
REV. F. A. CRAWSHAW,  
32 Milverton Avenue,  
Palmerston North.

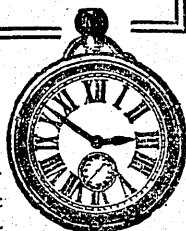


Have your  
old jewellery  
remodelled.

No need to put aside  
jewellery because it  
is old fashioned.  
Have us remodel it  
along modern lines.  
Prices are reason-  
able.

**Watch  
Repairs**

Play fair with your  
Watch. Have it  
cleaned and regul-  
ated every now and then. Repairs of  
every description carried out by  
skilled watchmakers.



**G. & T. YOUNG**  
Limited

88 Princes Street, Dunedin.

**THE TEACHING OF KARL  
BARTH.**

By REV. J. T. V. STEELE, Ngaio.

**II.**

We have still left to consider what is perhaps, on account of its novelty, the most interesting part of Barth's teaching and certainly the most difficult. One can never be quite sure that he sees exactly what Barth means or having understood just how it fits into the rest of his thought. Unfortunately Birch Hoyle is not as illuminating here as one would hope, though I suppose that in fairness we must attribute to him the ordinary limitations of mortality and reckon the confusion to the Barthians themselves. It will be convenient to divide what we have to say into three sections, dealing with History, Eschatology, and the Dialectical Method, which is used to express all their ideas.

**I.—HISTORY—ITS RELATION  
TO CHRIST AND THE BIBLE.**

It is important to realise that history is not a scientific concept, but what Brunner calls a theological-dogmatic one. The keynote to the understanding of this section is still the twofold thesis: The Transcendence of the Unknown God and the avoidance at all costs of any opening for the notion that by a continuous development of forces resident in mankind, man will ultimately ascend to God. Man and God are upon two different planes, and thus only God can reveal Himself as God. History can never be the revelation of God, only the occasion for it.

It is at once apparent that carried to its logical conclusion, a thing which neither Barth nor Brunner hesitate to do, this will seriously affect at any rate our popular thinking about Christ. He makes the apostle's distinction between Christ "after the flesh" and Christ "in the flesh." Christ "after the flesh" is the subject of historical and scientific study. It is the figure presented to us in the pages of the Gospels, though it is not the figure upon which either the faith of the Gospels or the Apostles is built. Faith can never be built upon history. History, as Barth learned from his teacher, Herrmann, can never attain to anything else but probability, and it is unthinkable that religious conviction should rest upon a probability. This accounts for the fact that this school is allied in

Bultmann to one of the most advanced movements in present-day New Testament scholarship. A good account of the "form" criticism, by which name it is known, will be found in Vincent Taylor's little book on "Introduction to the Gospels." The relationship between Christ "after the flesh" and the Logos is one of *necessary presupposition*, for the only way we have of recognising the Logos is through knowledge of the historical personality, which is summed up in all that we mean by Christ "after the flesh." History is never the *sufficient ground* for faith; for the question whether Jesus is the Christ is not a historical question, but one of faith.

In chapter 2 of "The Word of God," etc., Barth deals with "The strange new world within the Bible," in which he sets out his attitude to Biblical history. "What is the significance," he asks, "of the remarkable line from Abraham to Christ? The answer cannot be found in history, for when God enters, history for the while ceases to be, and there is nothing more to ask, for something wholly different and new begins—a history with its own distinct grounds, possibilities, and hypotheses." We are lead by the Bible History far out beyond history into the new world of God. So with the morality of the Bible. No one can seriously question the fact that the Bible is full of the loftiest moral teaching, yet at all points we are struck with its indifference to *our* conceptions of good and evil. The meaning of the Bible is Revelation, not Morality—it contains the world of the God and *His* morality. Again its meaning is not religion, our particular form of worship and belief, or, at least, its most legitimate successor. These are *our* questions. "In the Bible we find a new world, God, God's sovereignty, God's glory, God's incomprehensible love. Not the history of man, but the history of God! Not the virtues of man, but the virtues of Him Who hath called us out of darkness into His most marvellous light! Not human standpoints, but the standpoints of God!" All this is Revelation and is beyond history. History has for the meanwhile ceased to be.

**II.—THE HISTORY OF THE  
END—ESCHATOLOGY.**

From this point we pass naturally to Eschatology. Brunner says that the New Testament is eschatological through and through, and that faith worthy of

the name is as necessary as that man should have a head. This is another indication of the influence of the situation in Germany upon these men, for eschatological teaching has always flourished and been found necessary in conditions such as those in which Barth preaches and thinks.

At the outset it may be said that no sympathy is entertained with the views expressed by our recent visitor from Sydney. Eschatology is never used in a pre-millennial sense of the term, nor is it regarded, with Dean Inge, as the Jewish old clothes of the Gospel. It is the natural and necessary fulfilment of our present crisis. It means the final and complete break through of the Transcendent God. "The boundary line of time and eternity is not strictly measured by the clock, but by the moral crisis which comes in front of God." The idea of the second age as an endless continuation of this with its limits and sufferings removed is merely a deification of the present and an escape from the strenuous demand of the moral crisis. With the Resurrection the new age has come already, and dawned. Eternity stands related to this world not as one parallel line above another, but as perpendicular to it. At every place where it touches this life a crisis results. Man's whole life is a crisis. This eternal world makes itself felt in the Divine NO to every YES of man, and to every NO of man it places an unmistakable YES. Redemption is the close of the possibility of decision by putting aside the contradiction between God and man. Reconciliation points beyond itself to Redemption, but here and now within the scope set for us by our daily life. The man of faith has ever this hope and this looking forward to the completion of Redemption, which has already begun in the sphere of time and space. It must always be remembered that it is God's work, never man's, for man can no more redeem the natural order than he can himself. Our modern talk of "being in the Kingdom," "working for the Kingdom," or "advancing the Kingdom" is a mere confusion of tongues, resulting from the attempt to build a tower of Babel. Time is regarded as one of the marks of the brokenness of man, and the limitations and restrictions it places upon us is further evidence of our mortality. Time is the "fourth dimension," and along with space must be abolished, and indeed is already abolished when God enters. I

have not seen any discussion of this particular point in any of the Barthian writings known to me, nor does Birch Hoyle deal with it, but if I understand Barth rightly I would have no hesitation in saying that by this Barth does not mean to imply that time is not real. It is only too real, for it is at a particular moment of time that we apprehend the crisis. Indeed the whole notion would be meaningless without the reality of all that we call "this life"—time, evil, and death being its salient features. This tends to a marked dualism which none of the writers hesitate to accept. They refer to it as a prophetic dualism much as Oman does.

### III.—THEIR METHOD OF ARGUMENT.

Something must be said upon the method of argument employed by all these writers, which makes them particularly difficult to understand until one has made himself familiar with its underlying principles. Barth uses three logical methods.

(1) *Via Negativa*.—This reminds us of Descartes, who set out to doubt all things. Barth says: "By doubting we come to inquiry, by inquiring we perceive the truth if we inquire long enough." This method of doubt is chiefly called for by the religious situation of Germany. It was what Barth was actually forced to do. On the one hand there was the teaching of Otto, which at the hands of his disciples had degenerated into an elevation of feeling as the Master Key which will unlock all theological problems. "Feeling as a mode of knowing" is psychological nonsense, and Barth is concerned to write against this as large and as forceful a NO as possible. The subjective condition of the believer tells him nothing as to the objective truth. His reaction against the Neo-Kantian training at Marburg leads him to write a similar NO against the claims of reason to solve *alone* the problems of the foundations upon which convictions ultimately rest.

(2) *Via Dialectica*.—This method has been employed by great thinkers in the realm both of theology and philosophy, e.g., Thomas Aquinas, Calvin, Socrates, Kant, and Balfour. Birch Hoyle suggests that Barth's chief reason for this method again lies in the practical situation. In the Rhine Valley the Catholic community is very strong, and the manual of Catholic orthodoxy is Aquinas. Barth thus attempts to meet them on their own ground and at their

own game. The dialectic method is to counter the NO by its opposite YES, the thesis by the anti-thesis. It is the procedure of the examination room with its question and answer. Overbeck and Feuerbach, both masters of dialectic, have done much to create Barth's style of argumentation. Indeed the starting point of Barth's whole theology can be found in his dialectical treatment of Feuerbach's famous method of regarding as fantastic the reflections of theology and religion only to affirm the real nature of man. This leads him to the conclusion that theology is anthropology. Barth reverses this thesis and says theology is *not* anthropology since God and man are separated by a qualitative difference, therefore out of human nature no God can be constructed. Birch Hoyle gives several further illustrations of the Barthian use of dialectic.

(3) *Via Paradoxia*.—In this method two apparent opposites are placed in contradiction to each other so as to bring out a common truth. The great paradoxes of the Christian Faith are: The Transcendent Unknown God becoming known in the God-man. Sin, in which all men are involved, only being known in its hideousness when forgiven. We can each construct many for ourselves.

Barth is under no illusion, however, as to the adequacy of any methods of human reason to reach Divine Truth, for the God Who stood at the end of any human way of Dialectic would not be God. God's way in the Divine Word of Revelation will alone suffice.

This theological method does not lead to great clarity either of exposition or thought. In fact it is an open question whether Barth wishes to be clear to the discursive reason. He is a Transcendental Impressionist, and until recently, by his own confession, was content merely to impress. Further, it is too much like sitting on a pin for the sake of doing so. Too often the members of this school fail to think their positions out to their logical conclusions which, while it may be sufficient so long as one remains under the spell of a vigorous personality like Barth, cannot satisfy in the long run.

While independent use has been made of the other available English works, the writer is again extensively indebted to Birch Hoyle.

**ARTISTIC PLAYING of VIOLIN and CELLO** (with piano accompaniment from the very beginning), also PIANO and SINGING. Teaches thoroughly and prepares for all exams.—Fred C. Meyer, 18 Hall street, Wellington.