

cradle and seedbed of democracy in this country. The present reviewer is reminded of hearing the late Principal D. S. Cairns speak of a meeting held near his birthplace to demonstrate in favour of an extension of the franchise. High political dignitaries were present who had been sent to test the strength of the country's feeling in the matter. They were plainly told that the position was manifestly ridiculous, in which ordinary citizens were denied a voice in the choice of their governors, when for generations they had exercised control and determination in the much more important matter of choosing their spiritual directors. There is little reason to doubt that, as the author makes out, the election of ministers and officebearers by free vote was both an education in democracy and a discipline in responsibility. In matters charitable, at a time when we see more and more the agencies set up by voluntary charity passing under public and even state control, we may well regret the loss of that "nobler beneficence" which once the hand of the Church alone dispensed.

Though the lectures were delivered in 1935, the book has been brought up to date, and reference is made to the "survey of the Parochial System" presented to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1946. Recommendations here made are designed to apply to modern conditions the ancient and altogether indispensable parish system.

It is perhaps a cause of regret that there is such infrequent reference to the no doubt very carefully studied documents—a weakness which a brief bibliography hardly makes good. But the scope and scale of the book precludes any more detailed *apparatus criticus*, and we must be thankful for the convenience and the readability of the volume as it stands.

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*Dogmatik im Grundriss.* By KARL BARTH. Evang. Verlag, Zollikon-Zürich, 1947. pp. 183.

It is quite natural that Barth, with his conception of theology as a function of the Church, should find it congenial to take a Creed or Confession as basis for a theological work, as he did even in the case of his Gifford Lectures, which were based on the Scots Confession of 1560. In the volume now before us he has for the third time used the Apostles' Creed in this way. He did it first in his volume *Credo*, which contained the material of lectures delivered at Utrecht, along with a very important appendix giving the lecturer's answers to questions from a shorthand report. This was published in 1935, and an English translation under the same title was published in

the following year. Secondly, Barth published in 1943 a volume in French entitled *Confession de la Foi de l'Église*, with which the present reviewer cannot claim acquaintance. And now we have this third treatment in *Dogmatik im Grundriss*, containing the lectures he gave in Bonn University in the summer of 1946, when he taught for a semester by special invitation in the Faculty where he had exercised so great an influence in earlier days before the Nazis drove him out. Barth tells us that the situation at Bonn seemed to impose upon him a freer and more direct method than had been his wont, and he departed for the first time in his life from the written word, having his lectures taken down by a stenographer for publication. He apologises for the resultant lack of precision, but apology is quite unnecessary, for the book reads very smoothly, with an impressiveness of its own. In one respect it is an easier book to read than the *Credo* of 1935: it has less of the somewhat rhetorical style, with the use of sarcasm, which sometimes made Barth's earlier writings a little difficult to read and digest. As one reads this new book, one can imagine this world-famous theologian standing amid the ruins of Germany at the rostrum from which he was once driven, and prophesying to a tragic and bewildered generation, and can detect a note of broad and tender human sympathy. It is particularly interesting to find Barth here pleading for the translation of theology into terms that the man in the street can understand in relation to the needs and problems of the contemporary world, such as the question of war guilt. And yet one cannot help wondering whether these very lectures, delivered at Bonn to a mixed audience which included many non-Christians, might not have gone further in translating biblical, confessional, and homiletical speech into something less mystifying for the outsider. Or are we Anglo-Saxons (with our unconventional lay theologians like Dorothy Sayers, whom Barth nevertheless quotes sympathetically) too suspicious of anything like theological jargon, and therefore never quite at home with Continental movements in theology?

Barth does not expect us to find much that is new in this volume and the treatment generally is very similar to what we had in the *Credo* volume. But there are many interesting details, e.g. the theological importance which is attached to antisemitism and the whole Jewish problem, or the deprecation of the idea of an invisible Church in distinction from the visible, with the hint that nowadays in theology there is rather too much talk about the Church than too little. Barth wishes that Luther's term *Gemeinde*, which is nearer the meaning of *ecclesia*, had won the day, though he seems to be less definite than he was in *Credo* in connecting the Teutonic word

*Kirche*, church, etymologically with the Latin *circa*, circus, etc., instead of with the Greek *kyriake*, as has usually been done.

To turn to broader aspects: it is always interesting to try to understand Barth's "eschatological" scheme. In this volume there may seem at first sight to be very little eschatology, for the last two phrases of the Creed, "the resurrection of the flesh and the life everlasting", taken together, are given only about three pages. That is partly because Barth's lecture-hours were limited and he had unfortunately to hurry through the later stages, but it is partly because in a very important sense the whole of Barth's theology is eschatological. In the early days of this century the "thorough-going eschatologism" of Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer in the realm of Gospel interpretation was a kind of tidal wave, but since then it has overflowed its banks and watered all the land, so that almost everywhere theology has in new ways blossomed into eschatology; we may think not only of the Barthian movement on the Continent, but of the work of Karl Heim (*Jesus der Weltvollender*), Paul Althaus (*Die letzten Dinge*), and Oscar Cullmann (*Christus und die Zeit*), not to speak of the "realised eschatology" of C. H. Dodd in this country. In the *Credo* volume Barth worked out a kind of temporal scheme in which the truly revelatory period of "sacred history" was the period of the resurrection of Christ and the forty days that separated it from the ascension. Before it there came the (mainly) non-miraculous period of His life and passion, with its veiling of His glory; and after the ascension came the equally non-miraculous period in which we live, the period of the indirect rule of Christ through His Church, pending the final revelation of His glory at the *parousia*. One cannot but feel that this scheme gives to the forty days a fixity and determinative significance which can hardly be justified from the New Testament, where the relation of resurrection to ascension is much more fluid. The scheme does not appear so prominently in the new volume now before us, but there is no substantial change. Does this scheme, with its conception of the Church as belonging to the present interim period, this "time between the times", which is "the time of the Church", enable us to do full justice to the Christian doctrine of the Church? And how is this scheme related to Dodd's "realised eschatology"? Would it be accurate to say that while according to Dodd's version of the *kerygma* the new age was ushered in by Christ and we Christians are living in it, according to Barth's version there was only a temporary dawn of the new age, withdrawn again at the ascension, so that we Christians are not now living in it, except "dialectically", as we wait for the final consummation? Or do both Barth and Dodd agree in saying

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(as Cullmann also says) that in this present age we Christians are like an army whose decisive battle has been won and whose war is really over, though sporadic fighting still goes on? A clarification of these points of comparison is much to be desired.

Closely connected with this is another matter which in the earlier work has troubled the present reviewer: the conception of miracles in the sacred history as *signs* or pointers to the underlying mystery. In the *Credo* volume Barth makes the distinction of the *res* and the *signum*, or the mystery and the miracle, and applies it first in dealing with the virgin birth. The essential underlying mystery is the Incarnation itself, God becoming man; but God has also given us a sign, a miracle, to point us to the mystery; and the signpost is the virgin birth. The same distinction is used in connexion with the resurrection. The essential mystery there is God's victory over sin and death in Christ, a victory which was equally present, though concealed, even in the crucifixion; so that Easter adds nothing in substance to Good Friday, but it adds the *miracle* of the empty tomb and the appearances, and this is the *sign* which was needed to point men to the *mystery*, to *reveal* the concealed victory. The *Credo* volume hints at a similar interpretation of the ascension and of Pentecost. In the new volume this conception is not explicit except in the chapter on the virgin birth, where the treatment is very close to what has always seemed to the present reviewer to be one of the most puzzling chapters of the earlier work. On this view the "miraculous" events are strongly emphasised as having their place in Christian dogma, and yet they are given only an *extrinsic* connexion with the Gospel, as "signs"; they are hardly given an *intrinsic* connexion, as "mighty works" expressing the very essence and power of the Kingdom. As D. S. Cairns would have said, miracles seem here to be treated as seals attached to the charter, but not as part of the *content* of the charter. And thus Barth would confine them to a very short moment of the world's history, to the forty days, with occasional anticipations, while the rest of history is "non-miraculous" and will be until the end. The whole question bristles with difficulties, but if the above is a fair account of Barth's position, would we not by accepting it lose something of the important new insight which the work of D. S. Cairns gave us in this realm?

For a full treatment of eschatology proper, so very briefly treated in this short work, we may have to wait until Barth reaches the later stages of his monumental *Kirchliche Dogmatik*. But it is worth mentioning that here, as in the earlier work, Barth's eschatology most explicitly dissolves fear and dread into hope and joy.

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