

D

J.C.M.

# DURRANT'S PRESS CUTTINGS

29-39, Mount Pleasant, London, W.C.1.

Telephone: CENTRAL 3149 (Two Lines).

## Church of England Newspaper

182, Fleet, Street, London, E.C.4.

Cutting from issue dated.....

20 JUL 1962

69

# Barth's 'shorter writings'

18A 7566

Theology and Church, by Karl Barth (S.C.M. Press, 358 pp., 37s. 6d.).

WHATEVER one's judgment about the theology of Karl Barth may be, there can be nothing but wonder and amazement at the immensity of his literary output. After years of receiving a steady succession of monumental works we are now given his "shorter writings" of the period 1920—1928 and these occupy some 300 pages of a closely printed book! And it is astonishing to find that they show little signs of being dated. They are particularly valuable in revealing the keenness of his own critical mind coming to terms with the systems of some of his great predecessors in the world of theology.

A summary description of this book would be that it is the fruit

of Barth's vigorous mind examining great themes in the light of the notable contributions of earlier thinkers. Thus we find him dealing penetratingly with the views of Luther, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Feuerbach and Herrmann on such subjects as the Word, the Church, the Eucharist, Theology itself, Creeds, and Roman Catholic claims.

His knowledge of the history of doctrine is quite phenomenal. He is completely *au fait* with the writings of whatever author he is engaging in debate, and he is always fair, generous in appreciation, lively and perceptive.

A very substantial introduction has been written by Professor

Torrance of Edinburgh. This in itself is a fine piece of work, providing a brief sketch of the man and his history and expounding his views on the relation of theology to culture, the Church and secular knowledge. But it makes what I can only regard as quite exaggerated claims for the significance of Barth in the history of modern theology.

That his has been a major corrective influence and that he has enabled many to rediscover a living theology I do not doubt. But to give him a lonely eminence above all other theologians of modern times is a judgment which would certainly not gain universal support.

F. W. DILLISTONE