

## MONOGRAPH SUPPLEMENTS TO THE SCOTTISH JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY

This is a series of supplements to the *Scottish Journal of Theology* jointly edited by Professors T. F. Torrance and J. K. S. Reid

### REVELATION AND THEOLOGY

An analysis of the Barth-Harnack correspondence of 1923

H. MARTIN RUMSCHEIDT

In 1923 Adolf von Harnack, the Professor of Church History at Berlin, and his former pupil Karl Barth published in the Journal *Christliche Welt* an exchange of five open letters. This correspondence represents a classic statement of the two sides in a continuing theological debate about the nature of the theologian's expertise and his understanding of God. Harnack defended the established academic ideal of a 'scientific theology'—an objective study consisting primarily of historical investigation and critical reflection. Barth emphasized instead the role of revelation, grace and personal commitment in our understanding of God, arguing that to rely on the external proofs and authorities of natural theology was to empty religion of its significance and reality for the individual.

Dr Rumscheidt presents the correspondence, in translation, with a full critical analysis and evaluation. He estimates the importance of this debate for the new theology and the new Reformation which Barth can be said to have inaugurated.

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SCOTTISH ACADEMIC PRESS  
25 PERTH STREET : EDINBURGH

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SCOTTISH JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY  
VOLUME 28 No. 5

CONTENTS

Human Capacity and Human Incapacity: A Theological Exploration of Personhood, <i>by</i> J. D. ZIZIOULAS	401
The Discernment of Triunity, <i>by</i> CHRISTOPHER B. KAISER	449
Gore and Theological Synthesis, <i>by</i> P. D. L. AVIS	461

REVIEWS

DIAMOND: Contemporary Philosophy and Religious Thought	477	KYRIAKAKIS: To the Romans	488
RAMSEY: Christian Empiricism	479	BARRETT: The Second Epistle to the Corinthians	488
DAVIE: A Theology of Speech	480	HINCHLIFF: Cyprian of Carthage and the Unity of the Christian Church	489
LOTZ: Ritschl and Luther	482	SIMON (ed.): Aspects de l'anglicanisme	495
OBERMANN: Contra vanam curiositatem; LINK: Hegels Wort 'Gott selbst ist tot'; WÜRTHWEIN: Die Erzählung von der Thronfolge Davids;		METROPOLITAN ANTHONY: God and Man	496
GEIGER: Dann werdet ihr erken- nen . . .	484	SHEPPARD: Built as a City: God and the Urban World Today	498
WOLFF: The Old Testament	485	ROWE: Queen's Sermons	498
HENDRIKSEN: The Gospel according to Matthew	486		

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Printed in Great Britain by R. & R. Clark, Ltd., Edinburgh