

built up by the power of the actual presence in time—centring in the eucharist—of the eternal and unchanging kingdom of God. God's reign is here in secret, and all creation waits with eager longing for its full manifestation in glory.

ROBERT SHARP, O.P.

HEIRS OF THE REFORMATION, by Jacques de Senarclens, ; S.C.M., 37s. 6d.

This book, written from an explicitly evangelical standpoint, is an attempt to explore the bases of Christian faith and of theology. The author, although not lacking in independence of judgement, is clearly a disciple of Karl Barth, in agreement with him over almost every fundamental issue. For those who are well versed in the works of Barth there is little new in this book, for the attempt to survey the main positions which have been adopted in contemporary theology from a Barthian standpoint is a work which has ably been conducted by Barth throughout the footnotes of the *Dogmatics* and in other more occasional writings.

But even so this book is more than a mere summary of Barth's own position on these questions. It is an honest and workmanlike attempt on the part of Professor de Senarclens to think through these problems for himself, and at a time when honesty and good workmanship are values which are flouted on every side in theology in this country the translation of this book is a welcome event: perhaps what is required in theology at present is the continued re-examination of the bases of faith and theology—and in particular the refusal to regard the statement 'by faith we know . . .' as a statement whose meaning is unambiguous and self-evident, since this statement has been given as many interpretations as there are types of theology. As Barth has said, one of the main reasons why we should pursue an enquiry into questions of fundamental theology is the existence of heresy, the fact that different people, while apparently agreeing in accepting the Christian faith, accept it in such a way that it is impossible for them to recognise each other's formulations as variants of the same faith. This problem is forced on us all in a particularly intense form because we exist as heirs of the reformation, confronted by at least three fundamentally distinct forms of Christian faith—Roman Catholic on the one hand and Evangelical and Liberal Protestant on the other. In this situation we must necessarily become more self-conscious in our account of what theology is and what its path to knowledge is, both in order to ply theology ourselves and to engage in a dialogue with those people whom we can only regard as heretical. It is as a contribution to this task that Professor de Senarclens's book is of value, conducted as it is with sensitivity and objectivity. (Although it appears to me a disastrous lapse from objectivity to give an account of the christological presuppositions of Catholicism which consists purely in a development of the doctrine of Mary, unless he wishes to maintain that this is the only point at which there is a significant divergence from Evangelical theology—but this seemed the only place in which he was not attempting really to hear what his opponents had to say.)

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