

6-1-1946

The Protestant Purgatory

Th. Engelder

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Engelder, Th. (1946) "The Protestant Purgatory," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 17 , Article 34.
Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol17/iss1/34>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

Concordia *Theological Monthly*

Vol. XVII

JUNE, 1946

No. 6

The Protestant Purgatory

By TH. ENGELDER

The Hades gospel promises various classes of unbelievers that in Hades they will get another opportunity to be converted. See CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, 1945, May, June, September, and December issues. But it has a message also for the believers. It tells them that after their death they will be purged in Hades of the remnants of sin still clinging to them and thus be fitted for heaven. This Hades institution is not exactly the Catholic purgatory, but a purgatory it is still, a needed purgatory.—It is known as the Protestant purgatory.

The function of the Romish purgatory is to prepare the souls of the departed believers for heaven. While "the guilt is remitted to every penitent sinner," there remains a "debt of temporal punishment to be discharged in this world, or in the next in purgatory, before the entrance to the kingdom of heaven can be opened to him." So say the *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, Sess. VI, Canon XXX. Cardinal Gibbons explains: "The Catholic Church teaches that, besides a place of eternal torment for the wicked and of everlasting rest for the righteous, there exists in the next life a middle state of temporary punishment, allotted for those who have died in venial sin or who have not satisfied the justice of God for sins already forgiven. She also teaches that, although the souls consigned to this intermediate state, commonly called purgatory, cannot help themselves, they may be aided by the suffrages of the faithful on earth." (*The Faith of our Fathers*,

p. 205.) Di Bruno explains further: "Purgatory is a state of suffering after this life in which those souls are for a time detained which leave this world guilty only of venial sins. In purgatory these souls are purified and rendered fit to enter heaven, where nothing defiled enters. . . . After being purified there from the stain of these venial or lesser faults they are admitted into heaven." (*Catholic Belief*, p. 161.—1922.) "Rome teaches that 'the pains of purgatory are very severe, surpassing any endured in this life' (Bellarmine), so terrible and agonizing that they differ only from the pain of the damned in the fact that there is an appointed limit to the one, not to the other." (H. M. Luckcock, *The Intermediate State*, pp. 71, 76.) "The papists hold that one hour of purgatory is as painful as a thousand years of temporal bodily suffering." (Luther, IV:1661). "A passage in the *Catechismus Romanus* says: '*Poenā purgatorii excedit omnem poenam temporalem huius vitæ*'; i. e., 'The punishment of purgatory surpasses all temporal punishment of this life.' This is in accordance with what Cardinal Bellarmine says (de Purgat. . . . p. 410): '*Theologi fere omnes docent eodem in loco esse, et eodem igni torqueri, damnatos et animas purgatorii*'; i. e., "Almost all theologians teach that the damned and the souls in purgatory are in the same place and tortured in the same fire.'" (E. J. Stearns, *The Faith of Our Forefathers*, p. 237.)

The doctrine of purgatory involves a fundamental error. It holds that Christ did not fully satisfy the justice of God. It denies the chief article of the Christian religion, that through faith we have full remission of the guilt and punishment of all sins. It denies the heart of the Gospel and strikes at the heart of Protestantism. Luther: "Purgatory is one great lie; it is throughout pure wickedness and is based on unbelief. For they deny that faith saves and hold that man must satisfy the justice of God in order to be saved." (I:1462.) The Smalcald Articles: "Purgatory, and every solemnity, rite, and commerce connected with it, is to be regarded as nothing but a specter of the devil. For it conflicts with the chief article [which teaches] that only Christ, and not the works of men, are to help [set free] souls." (*Triglotta*, p. 465.)

That is the Catholic purgatory. And what is the Protestant purgatory? The Hades theologians, particularly those who believe in salvation by faith alone, refuse to embody

all the Romish features in their reconstructed purgatory. But they have taken over this feature: the dying Christian carries remnants of sin with him into the next world and must go through a purgatorial, purifying process in Hades before he enters heaven. Let us hear a few typical statements.

The Gospel of the Hereafter, by J. Paterson-Smyth, declares: "What of the souls who had gone out of earth from the beginning of the world without knowing Him? He was about to go forth in a few moments, 'quickened in His Spirit' (1 Pet. 3:18), to bring His glad Gospel to the waiting souls. At the Reformation time there were terrible abuses connected with the Church's doctrine of the intermediate life: the practice of purchased masses, and pardons, and indulgences, and all the absurdities connected with the Roman purgatory. One does not wonder—though one may greatly regret—that the indignant reformers, in sweeping away the falsehood, sometimes swept away also the underlying truth. . . . So for centuries this has been the 'lost article of the Creed.' . . . Think that the great majority of those who die, even though penitent and striving after right, have much of evil clinging to them; that even the best is not without many faults and stains. If nothing that defileth shall enter heaven, if growth is a law of all life as far as we know it, are we not practically compelled to believe that much of the growth and purification needed to fit us for God's presence shall take place in the great waiting life? . . . We are asking from Him blessing for them. For surely they are not above wanting His blessings still—not even the best of them—though safe with Him, though forgiven their sins, they are still imperfect, still needing to grow in grace, in purification, in fitness for the final heaven by and by. And we can help their growth. . . . Character is fixing eternal destiny. Hades life is dependent on character. Judgment is a sifting according to character. . . . It is character that makes heaven." (Pages 63, 65, 124, 129, 163 c, 202.)¹

¹ Note that the Hades gospel according to J. Paterson-Smyth proclaims both a second probation for the unbelievers and a purification for the believers. Not all who teach a second probation teach the Protestant purgatory. But the great majority does. When Schleiermacher spoke of "a continued probation after death," he had in mind also the believers and their need of progress in sanctification. He said: "If the believers would be the same ethically that they were at the time of death, sin would also dwell with them at the resurrection."

The gospel of the hereafter according to H. M. Luckcock declares: "In the intermediate state the spiritual element in his [the believer's] being is free to prepare itself, by a course of progressive advancement, for the goal of its ambition, the vision of God. . . . The Westminster divines committed an egregious blunder in laying it down as a dogma [in the Westminster Confession, chap. XXXII] that 'the souls of the righteous being then (i. e., at death) made perfect in holiness are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory.' . . . It seems almost impossible to form any other conclusion than that the souls of the departed pass through some purifying process between death and judgment. By far the majority of those who die are imperfect; they are not deserving of hell, but, at the same time, are quite unfit for heaven. Every one who dies with the blemishes and stains of a sinful nature uneffaced, even though he may have received pardon and forgiveness, will obviously require spiritual cleansing and purification. It has been authoritatively pronounced to be the indispensable qualification for admission to the vision of God. . . . It was a Lutheran divine of the greatest eminence who defied the narrow-mindedness of his sect and boldly taught that 'in a purely spiritual sense there must be a purgatory determined for the cleansing of the soul in the intermediate state.'—Bishop Martensen." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 15, 18, 26, 62 f., 72.) —Luckcock adds these thoughts: "There must, then, be souls in the intermediate state at different stages of progressive holiness, and such inequality almost necessitates the belief that the more advanced will be able to help those who are behind and less perfect themselves." (P. 169.)

E. H. Plumptre puts it thus: "Grant, as fully as you please, that a man is justified by faith and that one who dies in faith (I do not now discuss the nature of that saving faith) is therefore saved; it yet remains a fact of experience that the great majority of men die with characters imperfectly developed, with many weaknesses and sins. Are we to assume, and if so,

(*Glaubenslehre*, § 161, 1. — See *The Lutheran Church Quarterly*, 1944, p. 452.) When Prof. Charles Augustus Briggs, who disturbed the Church in 1893, spoke of "progressive sanctification," he meant these two things: in Hades certain unbelievers would have another opportunity for conversion, and the believers would have the opportunity to perfect their sanctification. (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 1893, p. 162.) Most Hades theologians follow this pattern.

on what ground of Scripture or of reason, that death, as in a moment, transfigures the whole man into the likeness of the Lord, and effects a complete sanctification? It can scarcely be supposed that the character, with all its weaknesses, or worse than weaknesses, continues stereotyped, as it were, at the hour of death. . . . That the 'sleep' (1 Thess. 4:13 f.; 1 Cor. 15:20) was not one of unconsciousness, and that some were capable of rising to a higher stage of knowledge and holiness seemed to be implied in the statements that Christ 'went and preached to the spirits in prison' and that the 'Gospel was preached to the dead' (1 Pet. 3:19; 4:6). It cannot be wondered at that the conclusions of Christian eschatology have seen in the intermediate state the region in which a work of illumination and purification might be carried on behind the veil." (*The Spirits in Prison*, pp. 124, 308.) Plumptre adds the thought "There is no *a priori* reason why we should not pray for the growth in holiness, and therefore in blessedness, of those who are behind the veil as well as for those who are still militant on earth." And there is that "wider hope. Our purgatory, if we may venture to seek to rehabilitate that abused and dishonored word, will not be confined to the baptized or to those who have known historically and through human teachers the revelation of God in Christ, but will include all who have lived according to the light they had." (Pp. 308, 309.)

F. W. Farrar, Dean of Canterbury: "I do not by any means hold the 'Romish doctrine of purgatory.' . . . But this 'Roman doctrine' is not to be confused with the opinion of many of the Fathers that there is *some* intermediate state wherein souls which, at the time of death, are still imperfect and unworthy and not yet in a state of grace—and of such are the vast majority of us all—may still be reached by God's mercy beyond the grave. The learned and thoughtful Lutheran Bishop Martensen holds 'that the Romish doctrine . . . nevertheless contains the truth that the intermediate state must, in a purely spiritual sense, be a purgatory destined for the purifying of the soul.'" (*Eternal Hope*, p. XXVII f.)

Statements like these do not constitute exceptions but represent the normal teaching of modern theology. Dr. Walther said in class: "Alle Neuere lehren ein Fegfeuer." He was commenting on Luthardt's statement: "Die Dogmatik laesst, *ungeschichtlich*, die Entscheidung mit dem Tod schon

voellig abgeschlossen sein. . . . Seit der Zeit des Pietismus kam aber die Lehre von einem Zwischenzustand wieder auf und wurde in der neueren Zeit beliebt, wobei es sich besonders um die Fragen der Zwischenleiblichkeit, der Entwicklungsfähigkeit und Bekehrungsmöglichkeit und der Möglichkeit vollendeter Heiligkeit handelt." (*Compendium*, 291-293. Substantially the same in the Luthardt-Jelke *Kompendium*, p. 432.) — To show how great a vogue the Protestant purgatory has attained in modern theology a few additional statements should be submitted.

Writing in *The Living Church* of 1944, W. M. Hay affirms: "Death, marking a definite period of progress here ended, ushers life into not two, but three possibilities — either hell (final fixation of the will against God) or heaven (final but ever-expanding rest of the good will in God), or a condition to be described as not-quite-heaven or not-yet-heaven. The common name is purgatory — the place or condition of cleansing from all vestiges of sin. The Scriptural basis for a belief in purgatory is very slight. The doctrine arises psychologically and philosophically." "There can be, then, for the intensely alive soul after death either heaven for the clean, a further preparation for the stained but heaven-worthy (not a magical change, not instantaneous, for the human will must co-operate); as for the hopelessly out of tune, they go to a place where hope is no more." "Purgatory: A Hope and an Escape.' For K. and all like him there is an experience (how prolonged no man knows) wherein and whereby all that is fault, wrong, undone, all that unfits him for the vision and nearer presence of God, will be purged and done away. Purgatory is the name of the sphere and the process by which those who (by faith, penitence and perseverance — though each of these be of the slightest) are destined for heaven, are purged, cleansed of all that unfits them for that high destiny." Desmond Morse-Boycott: "We may look beyond the purgatorial stage to the life of bliss in heaven. But before I direct your mind to a consideration of the holy city, let me remind you again that it is no part of the Christian faith to believe that we reach that stage of ultimate bliss as an automatic result of death. There are the greater saints of God, like St. Francis of Assisi, who live in such an intense communion with God here on earth, and are bathed in the fire of such abnormal con-

tact, that their sins and frailties are conceivably purged away before they died, so that death becomes to them the portal of heaven itself. But for most of the family of God, even the very saintly, death is a portal to a place of preparation for heaven." (*The Living Church*, Dec. 3, 1941.) *The Living Church*, May 14, 1944: "To the editor: I want to thank you for publishing the deeply moving article 'Purgatory — A Hope and an Escape.' . . . I find my only comfort in praying for the dead. . . . St. Peter in his First Epistle tells us that our Lord in the interval between His death and resurrection 'preached to the spirits in prison.' Our Lord's own words to the penitent thief were: 'This day shalt thou be with me in paradise.' He did not go into heaven on that day but into the 'place of the dead,' which was where the penitent thief must have gone also. Hence I am forced into the belief that the doctrine of a 'purgatory,' an 'intermediate state,' a 'larger hope,' is Scriptural and a part of the holy catholic faith."

H. C. Sheldon (Methodist): "The principal considerations which may be urged in favor of the supposition that progressive sanctification and distinct moral transitions may have place in the intermediate state are . . . (2) Peter's reference to the preaching of Christ, apparently in the interval between death and resurrection. . . . (3) Great multitudes of men who may be regarded as possessing the root of Christian character do not appear to have been completely sanctified before death. Therefore, since death cannot be regarded as transforming man's spiritual nature, the reason of the case seems to dictate that the completion of sanctification must be effected by a process covering a greater or less interval. At least no rational warrant can be found for the supposition that multitudes, whom the providence and grace of God fail to bring to entire holiness during the years of earthly life, encounter means of complete spiritual transformation the moment they pass out of this life." (*System of Christian Doctrine*, p. 555 f.) Edwin Lewis (Methodist): "It is frequently supposed that Christianity teaches that every man's eternal destiny is fixed at the moment of his death. That this belief has been taught here and there in the Church — especially in certain Protestant churches — is undoubtedly true. But it is not the proper meaning of the Gospel. It is not the uniform Christian tradition. When Scripture is quoted in support of the teaching,

it is usually some highly metaphorical passages which may have a quite different significance. . . . What we surmise is that between this world and the next—and the next—and the next—is moral continuity. . . . That purgatorial discipline will continue into the future life is an idea implicit in the total Christian view of things. . . . Inevitably the human soul passes through a succession of worlds until one of two unchangeable states is reached—the heaven, which is eternal life, or the hell, which is eternal death.” (*The Christian Advocate*, July 1, 1943.)

Richard Rothe (follower of Schleiermacher) affirms: “In the *Totenreich* salvation will be offered once more to those who died in unbelief. . . . Because of the corruption of their ethical nature it is much harder, and it takes a much longer time, to effect their renewal than is the case with the believers, who in Hades need to *eliminate only some dross*.” (See W. Oelsner, *Die Entwicklung der Eschatologie von Schleiermacher bis zur Gegenwart*, p. 32.) I. A. Dorner (follower of Schleiermacher): “The passages which make the pious enter at once a better place exclude a purgatory as a state of punishment or penance, but by no means exclude a growth in perfection and blessedness. Even the departed righteous are not quite perfect before the resurrection. There is, therefore, a *status intermedius* even for believers, not an instantaneous passage into perfect holiness.” (*System of Christian Doctrine*, IV, p. 410.) And that is the absolute truth, say the Swedenborgians, for “most people do not become altogether fitted for heaven in this world”; they must be “led from one society to another” in the next world (see *Popular Symbolics*, p. 394) “and in the next—and in the next,” as Edwin Lewis has it. “Some are taken up into heaven immediately after death, some after a short stay with good spirits, where the grosser things of their thoughts and affections are removed.” (Swedenborg’s *Heaven and Hell*, paragraphs 491, 498, 511 ff.)

Among the Lutherans too there are many, very many theologians who are spreading the fable of the Protestant purgatory. We read in the *Lutheraner* of 1945, page 195: “Blind muss ja derjenige sein, der nicht sieht, dass die Lehre vom Fegfeuer ein Schwindel ist. Leider gibt es lutherisch sich nennende Professoren und Doktoren, die dem Fegfeuer, wenn auch in feinerer Weise, das Wort reden. Zu Narren

sind sie geworden trotz ihrer Gelehrsamkeit." Dr. H. Martensen, Bishop of Seeland, Denmark, writes: "As no soul leaves this present existence in a fully complete and prepared state, we must suppose that there is an intermediate state, a realm of progressive development in which souls are prepared and matured for a final judgment. Though the Romish doctrine of purgatory is repudiated because it is mixed up with so many crude and false positions, it nevertheless contains the truth that the intermediate state must in a purely spiritual sense be a purgatory, designed for the purifying of the soul. . . . The departed live in a deep spiritual life. The soul now enters into its own inmost recesses, resorts to that which is the very foundation of life, the true substratum and source of all existence. Hence arises the purgatorial nature of this state. . . . Even the blessed in Hades have still an inner history, they still need a purifying, an increase and growth in holiness and in bliss." (*Christian Dogmatics*, p. 457 f. 463.)²

Kahnis, another leading Lutheran theologian, is fighting side by side with Martensen for the Protestant purgatory. He says: "Underlying the concept of purgatory there is this truth, that many Christians still need further cleansing. . . . There are very many Christians who, as far as men can judge, have true faith, but their faith is still so much debased by the dross of the Old Adam that we cannot but judge that they cannot, if they remain what they are, enter paradise, if paradise is to remain what it is. . . . Do not tell me that with the body also much of the Old Adam will be shuffled off. . . . The nature of a person cannot be changed by one magic stroke. How could a Christian, who is deficient in love, attain through death, suddenly at one stroke, perfect love? We are thus driven to assume that in yonder world purification and development is called for." (*Dogmatik*, II, p. 498. — Quoted and analyzed in Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik*, III, p. 567.)

² The Protestant-purgatory theologians make much of this affirmation by Bishop Martensen. Luckcock and Farrar, as we have seen, made use of it. So also Plumptre: "The *Christian Dogmatics* of Bishop Martensen takes its place side by side with Nitzsch's *Christian Doctrine*, or perhaps as standing on even a higher level as to clearness of vision and profoundly reverential thought." His lengthy excerpt from Martensen contains the quotation given above. It was also favorably received by the Catholics. The *Catholic Encyclopedia* writes: "Modern Protestants, while they avoid the name purgatory, frequently teach the doctrine of 'the middle state,' and Martensen writes: 'As no soul . . . in which souls are prepared for the final Judgment.'"

There is Seeberg, who also believes in a "purgatory not of satisfaction but of grace" in yonder world, that "being the real truth at the bottom of the Romish teaching of purgatory" (see W. Oelsner, *op. cit.*, p. 74; P. Althaus, *Die Letzten Dinge*, p. 203); and even Hengstenberg teaches: "In the realm of death the lowest compartment is the place of torment, the antechamber of hell, and the upper compartment is paradise, the antechamber of heaven. There the blessed dead dwell. . . . The believer has already here on earth the assurance of salvation, and this assurance grows when death relieves him of the misery of this world and brings him closer to the Lord. However, he cannot see God until he is perfectly sanctified (Matt. 5: 8; Heb. 12: 14; Rev. 21: 27). How and when does he obtain perfect holiness? We do not know how much influence the hour of death may have. But however great it be, the laying aside of the body cannot bring about perfect purification and sanctification, since the body alone is not the seat of sin. And remember that purification cannot take place in a moment. Now, since it is certain that in most cases the souls enter yonder world with their sins indeed forgiven but not completely eradicated, we are compelled to assume that the souls continue the process of cleansing, interrupted by death, in the *Totenreich*." (*Kirchenzeitung*, 1853. See *Proceedings, Illinois District*, 1886, p. 60.)

We have space for one more pronouncement. In his book *The Faith of the Church* C. M. Jacobs advocates both the possibility of conversion in Hades³ and the Protestant purgatory. "While speaking to you of the future life, there is one thought that I would suggest. It is not taught in the Scriptures and has no authority save that of probability. The thought of resurrection implies a time of waiting, and to me at least that means a time of growth, a preparation of the soul for entrance upon its higher form of life. This is the truth, it seems to me, that lies in the idea of a purgatory. To most Protestants the very word is abhorrent. It recalls to our minds the teaching of the Roman Church, which all of us re-

³ "Christians of all times have been concerned over the fate of those who in this life have never heard the name of Christ. . . . Are they to spend eternity in the outer darkness? . . . Does not this clause of the Creed [descended into hell] suggest—I will not venture to say that it teaches—another possibility? He descended into Hades, the place of the departed, that He might be their Savior too" (pp. 61, 62).

ject. It makes us think about a place of torment to which departing souls are taken, a place of punishment for those whose sins have been forgiven, a place of pain upon the road of heaven. But is there any one of us who believes that he is really ready to enter heaven now and be with a holy God, even though all his sins are forgiven? And may we not reverently hope that after death we shall be progressively prepared for a life that is so far beyond us that we are not ready for it now? Many have thought so, and I share that hope." (P. 111.)

Karl Hase (rationalist) thus sums up the case for the Protestant purgatory: "Die meisten Sterbenden sind wohl zu gut fuer die Hoelle, aber sicher zu schlecht fuer den Himmel. Most men are at death too good for hell, but certainly not good enough for heaven." And after presenting Moehler's description of the Catholic purgatory, he declares: "Our Protestantism is pretty much in accord with this enlightened view of a purgatory, whose flames have been extinguished." (Quoted in P. Althaus, *Die Letzten Dinge*, p. 203.) — Althaus adds this: "Selbst ein lutherischer Dogmatiker wie Rud. Hofmann in Leipzig erklart sich mit Hase's Satz einverstanden. (Herzog, *Realenzyklopaedie* 3, Artikel "Fegfeuer")." ⁴

⁴ J. A. Moehler: "The doctrine of an ulterior state of purification, of a purgatory in fine, is involved in the Catholic dogma of justification and is absolutely inseparable from the same. . . . We shall speak here only of the peculiar mode of communion which is kept up between us and the poor souls that are delivered over to the cleansing fire. . . . But as to the mode of punishment and the place which purgatory occupies the Church teaches nothing further; for she has, on this point, received no special revelations; and where we use the expression 'purifying fire,' we employ it only in the usual figurative sense." (*Symbolism*, p. 352 f.) — Farrar agrees with Hase: "In point of fact the taunt of the Romish controversialist Moehler that a 'Protestantism must either admit many into heaven stained with sin, or imagine that a magical change is wrought merely by death' is unanswerable, unless we reply with Karl Hase that both views are untenable, since most men at death are indeed not wicked enough to deserve an endless hell, yet not holy enough to be admitted into heaven. And Hase proceeds to argue with justice that our Protestantism is perfectly reconcilable (not indeed with a dogmatic and definite) but with 'a subdued and enlightened view of purgatory,' i. e., of progressive amelioration, of a purifying process, after death." (*Op. cit.*, p. 182.) — In his "*Widerruf vom Fegfeuer*" Moehler retains the heart of the Catholic doctrine of purgatory—the denial of the Gospel. We said above: "The doctrine of purgatory involves a fundamental error. It holds that Christ did not fully satisfy the justice of God. It denies the chief article of the Christian religion, that through faith we have full remission of the guilt and punishment of sin." Now note Moehler's declaration that the souls in purgatory suffer "punishment." On page 356 he repeats it: "In the other world the believer has still to endure punishment." And

Justin Martyr felt very strongly on this matter. He declared: "Those who hold that when men die their souls are at once taken to heaven are not to be accounted Christians or even Jews." (Quoted in *The Gospel of the Hereafter*, p. 36.) The moderns will hardly use the extreme language of Justin Martyr; but believing that most Christians cannot be taken into heaven at death, they insist, vehemently and passionately, that the Protestant purgatory is an absolute necessity.

Now, all of this is contrary to Scripture. Holy Scripture teaches that the souls of the believers are taken at death directly into heaven. Luke 23:43: "Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise."⁵ Luke 16:22: "And it came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom."⁶ Acts 7:55, 59: "Stephen looked up steadfastly into

in chapter 23, pages 170—176, he shows "that the doctrine of a place of purification is closely connected with the Catholic theory of justification," the Catholic teaching on justification being that in order to be justified, to be saved, "the Law must be fulfilled inwardly in us" (p. 175), that justification is essentially sanctification, "is considered an infusion of the love of God in our hearts" (p. 105). We cannot understand how men who believe in the *sola fide* are ready to accept Moehler's teaching on purgatory as being a more "enlightened view" than that of the Tridentine generation of Catholics. Did Cardinal Gibbons have a more enlightened view? We had his statement that purgatory is for those "who have not satisfied the justice of God for sins already forgiven."

⁵ *Lutheran Companion*, May 14, 1932: "Does the 'today' deny purgatory? — I believe it does. Here was a sinner who certainly needed purifying in the fires of purgatory if any man ever did; yet the promise is for immediate salvation. As Erdman says: 'Out of a life of sin and shame he passed immediately into a state of blessedness.'" It denies both the Catholic and the Protestant purgatory. Lenski's *Commentary*: "Here all the perversions about *sheol* and hades are brought in, plus even the descent into hades, confounding even confusion. Yet all this muddle furnishes no proof whatever for more than two places in the other world. . . . Also Jesus did not say: 'Today thou shalt be in purgatory.' Yet, if ever a sinner deserved a long term in purgatory, this malefactor was one. His immediate transfer into heaven is proof fatal to the idea of a purgatory or of any intermediate place." — We have shown in the preceding articles that in Scripture "paradise" and "Abraham's bosom" are synonymous with "heaven."

⁶ *The Pulpit Commentary*: "From our Lord's way of speaking of the great changes in the cases of both Lazarus and Dives it would seem as though there was absolutely no pause between the two lives of this world and the world to come." "It would seem" — make it stronger! Stoeckhardt, *Biblische Geschichte*, p. 207 ff.: "The beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, that is, into paradise, the home of the blessed. . . . The end of the believers is eternal bliss, the fullness of joy in blissful communion with God and all the elect." Kretzmann's *Commentary*: "The beggar died. But his death provoked an embassy from heaven: he was carried up by the angels into the bosom of Abraham . . . was joyfully received into the eternal home and found a place of honor by the side of Abraham."

heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Is this one of the "highly metaphorical passages" which Edwin Lewis had in mind? Phil. 1:23: "Having a desire to depart and to be with Christ." Is this another highly metaphorical passage? ⁷ 2 Tim. 4:7 f.: "I have finished my course. . . . Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." Metaphorical? ⁸ Heb. 12:22 f. In "the heavenly Jerusalem," the home and dwelling place of God, are now dwelling "the spirits of just men made perfect." They are not waiting for the Last Day to be pronounced perfect. Luke 2:29: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." The day of Simeon's death brought this peace. Rev. 14:13: "Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." Luther: "'Vom Fegfeuer.' . . . 'The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart. . . . He shall enter into peace' (Is. 57:1, 2). That is all we need to know about the saints, who die in Christ. Theirs is a peace and security that is beyond our comprehension. . . . After the dissolution of their bodies they rest in peace and security till Christ comes for the Judgment. Rev. 14:13 plainly indicates that. They that die in the Lord are in eternal bliss. Therefore, since the text states that they are at rest, it follows that there is no purgatory. If they died in the Lord, they rest from their labor. Oder du musst die Worte der Offenbarung ganz und gar leugnen. . . . It is enough that we know that according to Luke 16:23 ff. Abraham and Lazarus are in peace and rest.

⁷ Charles Hodge: "Two things are here perfectly plain: first, that Paul regards the state of the soul after death as more exalted than its condition while in the flesh, and, secondly, that this change for the better takes place immediately after death. He was confident that as soon as he departed he would be with Christ. Both these points are conceded even by those who deny the doctrine which they evidently involve." (*Systematic Theology*, III, p. 729.) — Herzog, R. E. 3, s. v. Hades: "According to 1 Thess. 4:16 and 1 Cor. 15:25 it would seem that the departed Christians too remain in Hades till the resurrection. The contrary teaching is found in Phil. 1:23, where it is said that the believers are after death *ὄν Χριστῶ*, that is, not in the realm of the dead, but with God." Which Paul is the more reliable one?

⁸ Hoenecke: "'I have finished my course.' According to this statement of the Holy Ghost the Christian course, of which sanctification is an essential part, is finished at death; consequently the fight for holiness is ended with death. Sanctification is a battle, is labor. That, says Scripture, is followed by rest." (*Ev.-Luth. Dogmatik*, IV, p. 234.)

You cannot prove the purgatory from this text." (VII:318 ff.) Stearns: "To this atrocious teaching [on purgatory], for all which Rome is responsible until she puts Bellarmine in the Index, I oppose the opening verses of the third chapter of the Book of Wisdom, which Rome accounts canonical: 'But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.' In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die; and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction; but *they are in peace*. And to 'make assurance doubly sure,' I meet and vanquish it with a passage of Holy Writ which utterly annihilates the whole doctrine of purgatory [of the Catholic and the Protestant purgatory]: 'I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me . . . that they may rest from their labors.'" (*The Faith of our Forefathers*, p. 238.)⁹

"At death the Christian immediately enters into eternal bliss." (Luther 7:1629.) The moderns will not let him enter the presence of the Lord so soon, but Luther asks him to rejoice in this blessed truth. He comforts the mourners with it. "We should know that our Urban [Rhegius] . . . is now in heaven and enjoying eternal life in the company of Christ and the Church in heaven; he now learns, hears, and sees as present before him those things which he had preached here in the church out of God's Word." (XIV:145.) He comforted himself with it. In a letter to Justus Jonas, Oct. 18, 1535, he wrote: "Christus gebe, dass ich in diesem Jahre in den Himmel eingehen moege, Amen." (XXI b:2016.) And he taught us to pray: "We pray in this petition, as the sum of all, that our Father in heaven would . . . finally, when our last hour has come, grant us a blessed end and graciously take us from this vale of tears to Himself in heaven." (See also IX:1783.)

But the moderns will not have it so. They deny that Scripture teaches any such thing. Some dismiss the passages just quoted as "highly metaphorical." Others divest them of their plain meaning. Phil. 1:23 is interpreted thus: "After death St. Paul desired to be with, that is, to be in Christ's keeping.

⁹ The above list of passages, with some variations, is quoted and discussed in *Lutheraner*, 1888, p. 114 ff.; *Proceedings of Michigan District*, 1903, p. 65; *Lutheran Standard*, July 14, 1945; *Lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, Aug. 2, 1924; Th. Traub, *Von den letzten Dingen*, p. 32; A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 563 f. Etc.

He did not expect to receive his reward for his labors till the end of all things. . . . It is significant that in 1 Cor. 15: 12, 13, 20-23 St. Paul says not one word about 'going to heaven.' . . . I would have you look at the Acts of the Apostles and see from them what was the hope set before men that the Apostles everywhere preached. You will find that it was not 'going to heaven' after death, but the resurrection of the dead. "They preached, through Jesus, the resurrection from the dead" (Acts 4:2)." S. Baring-Gould, *The Restitution of All Things*, pp. 15, 18, 119.) — *The Gospel of the Hereafter* disposes of Phil. 1: 23, Rev. 14: 13, and the other passages thus: "And he is 'with Christ.' The Bible teaches that the faithful who have died in Christ are happy and blest in paradise, even though the final heaven and the beatific vision is still but a thing to be longed for far off in the future. Lazarus is 'comforted' after his hard life on earth. 'The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, there shall no torment touch them.' 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord . . . they rest from their labors.' But best of all it assures us that they are *with Christ*. 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,' the dying Stephen prayed as he passed into the unseen. They are 'absent from the body, at home with the Lord.' They 'depart to be with Christ, which is far better. . . .' The *intermediate* life is the stage before the resurrection which in our Lord's time the Jews called Hades and in which they called the special state of the blessed paradise, Abraham's bosom. . . . Paradise is not heaven, but is the courtyard of heaven." (Pp. 32, 95, 97.) It is a mere assertion that paradise is not heaven; and it is a mere assumption that when Paul desired to be "with Christ," he did not desire to be with Christ *in heaven*; the only proof lies in the assumption that believers do not go to heaven at death.

Having disposed of our passages, the moderns offer passages of their own. They operate with 1 Pet. 3: 18. But that text does not speak of *believers*. And with 1 Pet. 4: 6. But that text speaks of men who are now with God in *heaven*. (See CONC. THEO. MONTHLY, 1945, p. 379.) — Luckcock offers 1 Cor. 13: 12: "Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." Luckcock admits that Paul might be speaking of the consummation of knowledge in heaven, but even if this be so, he understod well the general principles upon which God chooses to accomplish His work and must

have realized that it would be more in accordance with these principles that it should be the result of gradual and progressive development through the period of waiting and undisturbed contemplation in the disembodied state." (*Op. cit.*, p. 60 f.) Can the text stand for this? — *The Gospel of the Hereafter* offers Phil 1:6. "And this belief and hope for all those poor faulty souls in whom the good work of God has begun on earth St. Paul confirms. 'Being confident of this very thing that He who hath begun a good work in you will perfect it *until the day of Jesus Christ*' — i. e., right through the earthly life, right through the intermediate life, until the great scene in the drama of our history opens at the Judgment Day." (P. 129.) Any comment necessary? — Dorner offers Matt. 12:32. (See Plumptre, *op. cit.*, p. 253.) Cardinal Gibbons operates with this text in order to prove the Catholic purgatory. *The Faith of Our Forefathers* says: "His first proof is from St. Matt. 12:32: 'Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come.' But this won't prove purgatory; for three reasons: 1. We can't conclude logically that because one sin will *not* be forgiven hereafter, other sins will. As Cardinal Bellarmine admits: 'The inference does not follow from the premises': *non sequi secundum regulas dialecticorum.*" (P. 229.) Dorner and the others listed in Plumptre, who build up the Protestant purgatory on this text, should take notice. — Would John 14:2 help? Even Baring-Gould shakes his head: " 'In my father's house are many mansions; I go to prepare a place for you,' said Christ. A mansion is a caravanserai, a lodging on a journey, where the traveler rests for a night and then goes on his way. It has been supposed from this that the soul passes through a progression in holiness, towards perfection, till it reaches the great end of the journey, which is when soul and body are united at the great day of resurrection and judgment; that as at a caravanserai the traveler washes the soil of the journey, so that there are stages of purification from the faults and failing of this life. But we know nothing for certain, and Scripture is singularly silent thereupon." (*Op. cit.*, p. 17.) However, of one thing Baring-Gould is certain. "But this we do know, that the human soul must endure some period of humiliation and tears [in an intermediate state] before it can attain to a condition fitting to be ever with the Lord." (Pp. 16, 112.)

Great importance is attached, finally, to the argument based on the Scriptural teaching concerning the Last Judgment. The argument runs thus: "If the Christian were made perfect immediately at death, the Final Judgment would be superfluous." (Thus Dorner; see Oelsner, *op. cit.*, p. 50 f.) Baring-Gould: "This is obvious that if their [the souls'] final lot were determined at the moment of death, a Last Judgment would be superfluous." (*Op. cit.*, p. 10.) There are others who use this argument; see *CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY*, 1945, p. 592. Scripture teaches both: at death the soul of the believer is judged and is accounted worthy, for Christ's sake, to enter heaven at once. And, all men will be judged at the Last Day. But what about the argument that one judgment makes the other superfluous? *CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY*, *l. c.*, says: "The general judgment is the *solemn and the public confirmation* of the particular judgment. It is, furthermore, a *general* judgment, including the bodies of the raised dead and those living at the Last Day. And, finally, it is the *full* revelation of the wickedness of the unbelievers and the glory of the believers." — To sum up: "Scripture leaves no room for an intermediate state of development in moral and spiritual progress." (E. H. Klotsche, *Christian Symbolics*, p. 191.)

So much for the Scripture proof adduced by the advocates of the Protestant purgatory. But they do not rely on mere Scripture to prove their thesis. Their chief argument is a philosophical, psychological, rationalistic consideration.¹⁰ They argue that God cannot and would not eliminate the remnants of sin remaining in all (or most) believers in the moment of death, for that would involve a magical, mechanical, violent, unnatural process. "The nature of a person cannot be changed by one magic stroke. How could a Christian . . . attain through death suddenly, at one stroke, perfect love?" (Kahnis.) These men do not, as a rule, bother much with adducing Scripture proof, but hasten on to the psychological proof. "Remember that purification cannot take place in a moment.

¹⁰ W. M. Hay uses plain language: "The Scriptural basis for a belief in purgatory is very slight. The doctrine arises psychologically and philosophically." (See above) Cardinal Gibbons: "Therefore our common sense demands a middle place for the purgation of the soul." (*Op. cit.*, p. 217.) Luckcock: "Reason suggests that man's cleansing after death will bear at least some relationship to his cleansing in this life." (*Op. cit.*, p. 65.)

... The process of cleansing must continue in the *Totenreich*." (Hengstenberg.) "Growth is a law of all life." "Are we to assume, and if so, on what ground of Scripture or of *reason*, that death, as in a moment, transfigures the whole man into the likeness of the Lord?" "No rational warrant can be found for the supposition that multitudes . . . encounter a complete spiritual transformation the moment they pass out of this life." "There is not an instantaneous passage into perfect holiness." "Not a magical change, not instantaneous, for the human will must co-operate." And Farrar thinks that Moehler is about right when he says that "Protestantism must either admit many into heaven stained with sin or imagine that a magical change is wrought merely by death."

It is significant that Moehler, in defending the Catholic purgatory against the Old Protestants, uses this no-magical-change argument precisely as the modern Protestants use it in defense of their purgatory. *Symbolism*, p. 174 f.: "Or, in case we leave this earthly world still bearing about us some stains of sin, how shall we be purified from them? Shall it be by the mechanical deliverance from the body, whereof the Protestant formularies speak so much? . . . Are we to imagine it to be some potent word of the Divinity, or some violent mechanical process, whereby purification ensues? Some sudden, magical change the Protestant doctrine unconsciously presupposes. . . . The Protestants saw themselves compelled to adopt, tacitly at least, the idea of a mechanical course of operations practiced on man after death and left unexplained how a deep-rooted sinfulness, even when forgiven, could be at last totally eradicated from the spirit. The Protestant communion thus offers a solace to man . . . without regard to the eternal laws of the human spirit, and by a very guilty encouragement to moral levity."

What about this Moehler-Farrar-Kahnis dilemma that the Old Protestants must assume: either that sin-tainted men are received into the holy heavens or that the change wrought in them at death is a violent, unnatural, magical, mechanical act? *Tertium datur!* We Old Protestants certainly believe that our holiness in heaven will be a perfect holiness; we believe, too, that all remnants of sin will be removed from our soul at the moment of death, instantaneously; and we believe and know that in effecting this glorious change God is not breaking any

psychological or any spiritual law. There is nothing in philosophy, nothing in sound reason, which would prevent God from performing miracles. And a miracle of grace takes place when God changes this wretched, imperfect soul into one formed perfectly in His image. A miraculous change need not be a magical change, whatever "magical" may mean. And a miraculous change need not be a mechanical one. It is throughout spiritual. It does no violence to our spiritual nature when God, through His powers of grace, heals our sick soul with one gracious touch. The Christian soul does not complain that God is laying violent hands upon it. It is filled with heavenly joy over this wonderful change. God cannot perform the miracles of His grace instantaneously? In conversion an instantaneous change takes place, and the converted Christian does not complain of violence, coercion, mechanical processes, and the like. In conversion God draws the sinner gently, and the sinner hears a sweet and gracious voice. And when God bestows upon the believer in the hour of death, at the moment of his entrance into the Holy Place, perfect holiness, his deepest longings are satisfied. He had been crying out: "Oh, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:24). And now the miracle has been performed. It took but a moment. He closed his eyes in death and awoke in heaven! And "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Ps. 17:15).

J. J. Knap: "We do, indeed, know that nothing shall enter heaven that is unclean, and that the holiest child of God dies as a sinner, who must complain of the evil that besets him. But does that mean that a process of centuries is necessary to make him meet to enter those heavenly spheres? God's Word teaches us otherwise. The Lord works a miracle of grace in those that fall asleep in Jesus. In a moment he completely delivers them from sin. By this radical miracle of grace, and not by a gradual process hereafter, God makes these souls in a moment of time fit to enter the heavenly temple where the angel choirs sing: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord!'" (*Life Beyond the Grave*, p. 172.) — In a preceding paragraph Knap had said: "Some people are so encased in the theory of evolution that they dream of an incessant process whereby mankind gradually climbs from lower to higher de-

velopment, even from sin to holiness. Their idea is this: mankind is slowly outgrowing the power of evil. This development does not take great leaps, but makes an almost unnoticeable advancement, like the slow growth of the mighty oak. . . . In the life beyond the grave the process of development continues, soul life ripens and becomes more capable of living with God. No one is lost. Even the soul of the greatest malefactor will ascend out of sin along this ladder of development. How long this purifying process (we might call it a purgatory far worse than the Roman, since even the souls of unbelievers will be purified), how long this process may take no one can say."

Th. Traub: "Kliefoth asserts that 'no unnatural leaps (unnatuerliche Spruenge) occur where the all-wise God deals with man.' We refuse to subscribe to such a thought. *If there are no 'unnatural leaps,' all of us are lost.* Then there would be no Christ, no faith, no conversion, no absolution. For all of these things are 'unnatural leaps'; all of it takes place in the history of mankind and of the individual, not as the result of any kind of evolutionary development, but as *divine miracles* which change the natural life of mankind and the individual." (*Op. cit.*, p. 54.) See also Hoenecke, *op. cit.*, p. 233 ff.; Fr. Brunn, *Erklaerung des Kleinen Katechismus*, pp. 367 f., 372 f.

To us it is not a horrible thought that in the moment of death God Himself will eradicate all sin from the soul and bestow the perfect holiness of heaven upon it. We look forward with joyful longing to this miracle of grace (and to that other miracle of grace: the resurrection, purification, and glorification of the body, which is certainly not a natural development, but an "unnatural leap," the result of God's direct intervention in the natural course of events). We believe with the Apology that "death itself serves this purpose, namely to abolish this flesh of sin, that we may rise absolutely new" (*Triglotta*, p. 299). We rejoice with Luther: "So, then, death, through the most gracious and all-merciful goodness of God, has become for the Christian people the end of sin and the beginning of holiness." (X:1881.) "Now we know why the Christians are called in Scripture 'the children of mercy, a people of grace, the object of God's good will'; the reason is that in Baptism they have begun a life of purification

and are not, through God's mercy, damned because of the remnants of sin, till they are thoroughly cleansed of their sin through death and on the Last Day. . . . Death kills our sinful, evil nature." (X:2120.) Discussing the question whether this great change can be effected "by one magical stroke," Dr. Pieper adduces the analogy of conversion — faith is not the result of man's co-operation but a creative act of God (2 Cor. 4:6) — shows that Luther and the old Lutheran theologians were right in teaching that at death the soul of the believer is freed from the remaining dross of the original depravity, because it is now "in paradise," the home of the perfectly pure, and "with Christ" (Phil. 1:23), this most intimate communion with Christ perfectly purifying the soul, and closes with the statement "Luther therefore calls death the last *purgatorium* of the soul" (op. cit., p. 577).

The Protestant purgatory has no place in the Christian Church. It is against Scripture. It is the product of the dreams and speculation of poor mortals,¹¹ and it militates against the precious doctrine of salvation by faith alone. Judging of this matter by reason, the moderns are swayed by the *opinio legis* which inheres in natural reason. The basic error that underlies their argumentation is that sanctification, perfect holiness, is a condition for entering into life eternal, while Scripture teaches that perfection in holiness belongs to the bliss of eternal life and is the gift of God's grace.

¹¹ And speculations are no basis for faith and certainty. The Protestant-purgatory men themselves, as a rule, label their teachings as guesses (but claim the right to preach them in the Christian Church). "We must suppose" (Martensen). "We are driven to assume" (Kahnis). "We are compelled to assume" (Hengstenberg). "The nature of the case seems to dictate." . . . "Supposition" (Sheldon). "Probability" (Jacobs). "We surmise" (Lewis). — We are wondering on whose authority Archibald Campbell declares that "the abode of the righteous during the interim between death and the resurrection, called paradise, is . . . a place whence our blessed Lord's humanity is sometimes to be seen, though beclouded or veiled." (See Hodge, *op. cit.*, p. 741.) — How long do the believers remain in the place of purification? Hay declares: "How prolonged this experience is, no man knows." Archibald Campbell: "The righteous make advances in perfection, and yet they are not for all that carried out of that middle state into glory, or into the beatific vision, until after their resurrection." Luckock: "It may be some few have actually entered into the heavenly city — that is, if the martyrs are already enjoying the beatific vision, as the Roman Church teaches. Others have disappeared from the earthly horizon and are crossing the valley beyond at diverse degrees of progress and advancement." (*Op. cit.*, p. 236.) — What becomes of those believers who are still on earth at Christ's return to Judgment? Will they be purified "by one magic stroke" or will the Protestant purgatory operate for a while after the Last Day for their benefit?

In passing we call attention to the monstrous assertion that there are believers on earth who do not need any further cleansing (Kahnis). Luckcock repeats it: "The majority of those who die are imperfect" — some having attained perfection. Morse-Boycott repeats it: "The sins and frailties of the greater saints of God like St. Francis of Assisi . . . were conceivably purged away before they died." There are no such believers. Even Paul cried out: "Oh, wretched man that I am, etc.!" We say that there are no Christians on earth who are not in daily need of justification by grace. And to spread the idea that the Christian can attain perfection in this life is a subtle perversion of the doctrine of justification by faith alone.

But the Protestant-purgatory men impugn the fundamental teaching of Christianity more directly. Analyze Hase's statement "Most men are not good enough for heaven" and Luckcock's statement "The majority are quite unfit for heaven. . . . The spiritual cleansing is the indispensable *qualification* for admission to the vision of God." To be sure, only the pure shall see God; but not because they are now "good enough," not because they have now achieved the necessary qualification, are they now *worthy* of heaven. Hay uses this very phrase: "heaven-worthy," just as Gibbons uses it: "worthy of enjoying the companionship of God and His saints. God 'will render to every man according to his works'" (*op. cit.*, p. 218). And *The Gospel of the Hereafter* uses very plain language: "Judgment is sifting according to character. It is character that makes heaven. Character is fixing eternal destiny." No, no; no kind and degree of holiness *entitles* us to heaven. Heaven is a free gift. And the perfect "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord," is Heaven's free gift.

Add to this the fact that the Protestant-purgatory literature abounds with statements of a Pelagianistic-synergistic cast. Luckcock: "The idea of sudden or instantaneous cleansing, when carried to its logical result, destroys free will." (*Op. cit.*, p. 65.) "The soul is free to prepare itself." (See above.) Hay: "The human will must co-operate." Martensen: "The soul now enters into its own inmost recesses." To be sure, the believer co-operates in sanctification, but not through powers which are the fallen soul's natural powers. It reminds

one of the argumentation of the Semi-Pelagian Moehler, who in defending his purgatory operates with "the eternal laws of the human spirit" and "the free and gradual development of the human mind" (*op. cit.*, p. 175 f.). But Pelagianism and salvation by *sola gratia* do not agree.

It is not our holiness that makes us worthy of heaven. It is faith that makes us heirs of heaven. Christ's merit, grasped by faith, makes us worthy of heaven. "He that believeth on the Son *hath* eternal life" (John 3:36); and if he dies without performing a single good work, he enters the Holy Place. Pieper: "In the moment that a man, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, *comes to faith*, he *has* the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. John 3:36; 5:24." (*Op. cit.*, p. 576.)—If anyone says that perfect holiness is the condition on which entrance into heaven hinges, a condition to be fulfilled in whole or in part by the use of the soul's natural powers, and denies that the perfect holiness, in which we enter heaven, is God's free gift, he denies the article of salvation by grace, by faith.

Dr. Pieper: "Kahnis' words show that he is contending for a purgatory on the basis of the Romish doctrine of works. He does not see the true connection of justification and sanctification and is unable to separate them properly." Some people say that Pieper (and Luther) are hide-bound theologians. They will hardly say that of P. Althaus. And Althaus passes the same judgment. "One who is going to teach a purgatory of any kind must also deny the doctrine of justification—and he can do it, of course, by getting rid of its true sense through moralistic interpretation. But he who knows what justification really means, who does not explain away the staggering moral offense reason finds in unconditional forgiveness, but bears it, he will not embrace, in eschatology, the heresy of a purgatory; it is one and the same God, the God of justification, who does not ask us to achieve our 'organic' moral purification—even if that were possible—but *He* breaks the fetters that bind us, in royal liberty, in His own good time." (*Op. cit.*, p. 222.) Th. Traub: "Rinck is right when he states that the idea of the need of a progressive sanctification and purification after death is, at bottom, due to the error that the elimination of sins is not the result of the one sacrifice of Christ, but must be achieved by our own work in

holiness." (*Op. cit.*, 54.) Rev. William M. Lange wrote "To the Editor" (*Living Church*, April 16, 1944): "I have just read the Rev. W. M. Hay's 'Purgatory: A Hope and an Escape.' As I read it, I could not help thinking, If that is the prevalent view of the Protestant Episcopal Church, I am ashamed to belong to it. Mr. Hay seems to hold by the gospel of works. . . . I would bring back a faith in the saving blood of Christ, which is, the Bible tells us, the only way to heaven."¹²

The Congregational-Catholic W. E. Orchard writes: "It could be claimed that it was over the question of purgatory that the Reformation took its rise, for it was Tetzels sale of indulgences that fired the train of revolt in Luther's mind. Yet, strangely enough, it is at the point of this very same doctrine that the Reformation Movement is now exhibiting a tendency to return to the Catholic faith. Modern religious thought is impressed with the need of some preparatory purification for most souls passing from this world before they can be considered fit for the direct vision of God." (*Foundations of Faith*, IV, p. 81 f.) See the item in *CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY*, 1932, p. 220: "Modern Protestantism Rome-ward Bound." (Also *Lehre und Wehre*, 1871, p. 365 f.)

St. Louis, Mo.

¹² *The Lutheran*, Jan. 11, 1939, has this: "A review that recently appeared in *The American Lutheran* . . . classified a statement by the late Charles M. Jacobs as heresy. The review reads: '. . . Being acquainted with Dr. Jacobs' easygoing acceptance of Biblical inspiration, we can well understand that he had no other choice than to approach fundamental questions from this viewpoint. . . . We are likewise not surprised when he on page 111 makes this startling statement: "This is the truth, it seems to me, that lies in the idea of a purgatory. . . ." [The review gives the statement in full, as we have quoted it above.] "The above quotation . . . must come as rank heresy to all Bible Christians who believe the plain Scriptural statements that we are made fit for heaven not by our own works, but by grace through Christ Jesus alone. . . ." *The Lutheran's* reply: "What can be more humble, devoted, and reverent than a sense of man's essential unfitness at death for the company of saints and the effects of heaven in changing the nature, which is under the covering garment of righteousness, into absolute knowledge, purity, and holiness?" does not cover the point at issue.