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The Hades Gospel and the Apocatastasis Gospel

By TH. ENGELDER

The Hades gospel proclaims that some men will get another chance for conversion in yonder life. The apocatastasis gospel proclaims that all inmates of hell, including the fallen angels, will finally be saved.

The Universalist Profession of Belief, adopted at Winchester 1803, declares: "1. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain a revelation of the character of God and of the duty, interest and final destination of mankind. 2. We believe that there is one God, whose nature is love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness. 3. . . ." "This statement of belief in the ultimate success of the divine administration, the final holiness and sanctification of all souls . . . was made known and declared to all the world as an Evangel in the articles of 1803. . . . 'Hail,' then, we say to the men of Winchester, these preachers of an Unlimited Gospel. To save the glory and honor of God we must believe in the salvation of all his children. . . . About one hundred and fifty years ago men began to think and act whose hearts were intuitive of the love of an All-Father, and as they advanced in thought and fervor of soul, they could not but proclaim a gospel of gladdest news. . . . Nearly all the superstitions have gone at one blow. The devil troops to an infernal jail. The fires of hell are extinguished. A substitutional sacrifice disappears.

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God is not to be propitiated, but served and loved and enjoyed." (*The Winchester Centennial*, 1803—1903, pp. 21, 38, 50, 60, 154.) "Let those who impugn the Gospel of Eternal Hope remember that it was openly preached by the 'Father of Fathers'—Gregory of Nyssa—whose writings were referred to by the Council of Ephesus as the great bulwark of the Church against heresy. . . . He taught that the soul, having an affinity to God, must ultimately return to God." (F. W. Farrar, *Eternal Hope*, pp. 159, 161.)

This Evangel, "the gospel of gladdest news," has found many heralds. "Not only speculative theologians, such as Origen and Schleiermacher, but also Bible theologians, Zinzendorf, Bengel, Blumhardt, preached it." (A. Koeberle, *Das Evangelium und die Raetsel der Geschichte*, p. 72.) The list includes Gregory Nazianzen, J. Scotus Erigena, the Anabaptists Denk and Hetzer, the Schleiermacherians Nitsch, Schweizer, etc., Archbishop Tillotson, Charles Kingsley, John Foster, the pietistic mystic J. W. Petersen, the Berleburger Bibel, C. F. Oetinger (theosophist), etc., etc. (See Th. Traub, *Von den Letzten Dingen*, p. 272. W. Rohnert, *Die Dogmatik der Ev.-Luth. Kirche*, p. 620. Meusel, *Kirchl. Handlexikon*, s. v. *Wiederbringung Aller Dinge*, Schaff-Herzog Encycp. of Rel. Kn., s. v. Punishment, Future, etc.) Other Origenists will be mentioned later. "The new light has been gaining ground steadily for a hundred years. . . . We venture the prediction that by the end of another hundred years the idea of an endless punishment in any form, medieval or modern, will be obsolete among all Protestant churches. . . . The Universal Fatherhood of God is now proclaimed from the housetops of Orthodoxy, and while many of the clear-sighted recognize this as logically involving Universalism, it is accepted nevertheless." Thus *The Winchester Centennial*, pp. 39, 40, 44.

We submit a few typical statements. Charles H. Eaton: "The doctrinal teaching of the Universalist Church is (1) The universal fatherhood and the universal brotherhood revealed in a universal Savior. . . . (4) The certainty of punishment, having for its object the final recovery of all men. . . . (8) The reunion of all in the everlasting life. . . . When God was represented as an infinite demon, gluttoning himself with the agonies of the damned, burning forever in flames of fire and brimstone, the Universalists said such views of God are blas-

phemous. God is an infinite Father." (*Why I Am What I Am*, pp. 71, 75.) Dr. S. Shepard: "We (the Universalists) believe that this is a universe of absolute justice, and that every soul will meet with justice, working out its problems until in some way it comes to a stage of high development and harmony with God." (See J. A. Weber, *Religions and Philosophies*, p. 198.) The Unitarians have stated their creed thus: "There is a general consensus upon the unipersonality of God, the strict humanity of Jesus, the essential dignity and perfectibility of human nature, the natural character of the Bible, and the hope for the ultimate salvation of all souls, in distinction from the views traditionally taught on these points."¹ Theodore Parker, while he acknowledged that the doctrine of eternal punishment was taught in the New Testament, rejected it and came at last to say of the whole theology which includes this idea of endless punishment that it "sneers at common sense, spits upon reason, and makes God a devil." (See A. H. Strong, *Systematic Theology*, p. 599.) *The Bible Champion*, Oct., 1922, p. 386, quotes a Unitarian writer thus: "Heaven and earth and stars in their infinite number, all worlds that roll through the great Creator's space, would raise one universal shout of horror at the endless punishment of sinners. . . . An eternal hell would make the God inflicting it more reprobate and more deserving of such pangs than any human being, though we should imagine one uniting in himself the crimes of all the Caesars and the Borgias, the Hapsburgs and the Bourbons, the Sultans and the Tsars." Dr. Charles W. Eliot, President of Harvard: "The religion of the future will reject all the old teachings concerning rewards and eternal punishments. In particular, the new religion will not believe in a hell, where God punishes sin eternally. The God of the future will be a God of mercy and of goodness and of grace." (See *Lutheraner*, 1924, p. 424.)

Bishop Ewing of Argyll and the Isles: "Unless this (apocatastasis) be held as a matter of faith and not as a speculative dogma, it is practically valueless. With me this final victory is not a matter of speculation at all, but of positive faith; and to disbelieve it would be for me to cease altogether either to

¹ It has been said that the Unitarians teach that man is too good to be eternally damned, while the Universalists teach that God is too good to damn man eternally.

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trust or to worship God." (See F. W. Farrar, *Eternal Hope*, p. 218.) Harris Franklin Rall: "So far we have talked about the saints and their hope of heaven; but what about the sinners and the Church's teaching as to judgment and hell? . . . We must cast out some unchristian ideas that have remained too long in Christian thought. . . . This world is not so much a place for the testing as for the making of men; that is God's great concern. And why should he be limited to this world? The physical fact of death does not at a stroke change these mixed and unformed lives into pure saints or sinners. If the world to come has place for growth and change, that may mean change of direction. We cannot believe that a Christlike God will ever turn away from men who turn to him, or cease in his effort to win men from death to life." (*A Faith for Today*, p. 258 ff.) "The time was," said Pastor W. H. Burns at a Methodist conference in Detroit on Oct. 31, 1938, "when I was a boy, that I believed that the world was made in six days. I was taught and believed in literal hell fire. But none of us believe these things today. We have made advancement in doctrine and faith." In a sermon preached in Grace Methodist Church, St. Louis, March 22, 1931, Dr. James Crowther declared: "I believe in a Christlike God. Jesus taught us that God is love. . . . Mankind can never reverence, much less love, a God who consigns his offspring to the eternal torments of the damned. Only a theologian could do that, and God is not a theologian, but a father and a friend." Walter Rauschenbusch: "No man, in any human sense of justice, has deserved an eternity of hell." (*A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 233.) And the Liberal Catholic Church has this creed: "We believe that God is Love, and Power, and Truth, and Light; that perfect justice rules the world; that all His sons shall one day reach His feet, however far they stray." (See *Popular Symbolics*, p. 208. — "The Liberal Catholic Church encourages among its adherents the freest play of scientific and philosophic thought," says its spokesman in Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 74.) "We affirm," say the Spiritists in their Declaration of Principles, "the moral responsibility of the individual and that he makes his own happiness or unhappiness as he obeys or disobeys nature's psychic laws. We affirm that the doorway to reformation is never closed against any human soul, here or hereafter." (*Census of Rel. Bodies*, 1926. Part II, p. 1319.)

There are those who do not teach restorationism (or the related doctrine of annihilationism) directly, but speak of it as a possibility, and speak of it in a way which indicates that in their heart they believe in it. Vernon F. Storr, Archdeacon of Westminster: "The idea of an eternal fixity of condition, whether for weal or woe, does not appeal to us. . . . Another assumption made by the Universalist is that 'it is never too late to mend.' It may be so. The fate of the hardened sinner must remain an enigma. . . . The Bible throws little light upon the subject." (*Do Dead Men Live Again?* pp. 209, 225.) Sydney Cave: "Our Lord expressed this risk in terms of apocalyptic symbols. These symbols speak of loss that men need much to fear, but from them, in the opinion of most scholars, no theory of eternal punishment can be derived." (*What Shall We Say of Christ?* p. 177.) W. E. Channing (Unitarian): "I have spoken of the pains and penalties of moral evil, or of wrong-doing, in the world to come. How long they will endure, I know not. Whether they will issue in the reformation of happiness of the sufferer, or will terminate in the extinction of his conscious being, is a question on which Scripture throws no clear light." (*Channing's Works*, p. 353.) "Bei den Theologen der Aufklaerung koennen wir eine allmaehlig sich vollziehende Aufloesung der alten Lehre von den ewigen Strafen und damit des Dualismus, der den Gedankengang der Orthodoxie praegte, wahrnehmen. Hier wird von der Moeglichkeit und der *Wahrscheinlichkeit*, dass die Verdammten sich bessern koennen, gesprochen." The rationalists in the period of "enlightenment" spoke of the possibility and probability of the moral improvement of the damned. (G. Aulen, *Das christliche Gottesbild*, p. 300. — Here is a curiosity: "Die Verdammten stehen, wenn sie sich bessern, hinter denen, die von Anfang an selig sind. Eben dadurch aber, dass sie hinter denen stehen, erkennen sie in all Ewigkeit ihre Strafe. . . . Einige Theologen der Aufklaerung, wie Wegscheider, stellen sich vor, dass die Bestraften bei fortgesetzter Besserung den Platz einnehmen koennen, der frueher von Seligen niederer Grade eingenommen war. Wegscheider denkt sich deutlich das Ganze zunaechst als ein ausgebildetes Befoerderungssystem." *Ibid.*) Julius Mueller: "While it may be open to the sinner in the next world, as in this, to turn to God by a free act of will, it is nevertheless true that the tendency of

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sin is to perpetuate itself, and therefore that eternal punishment is possible." (Schaff-Herzog, *l. cit.*) *The Lutheran*, May 14, 1941: "Is there a hell? . . . In rejecting the extreme of material hell fire we should not go to the other extreme of explaining away hell itself. . . . In the moral order of a loving God, however, we have the hope that final mercy will prevail. Retribution may give way to reformation; justice to mercy. Divine Love, we like to believe, will triumph in eternity. Humanity's case is in the hands of the all-wise, all-gracious God, in Christ, the Savior-Judge." C. M. Jacobs: "But does not this clause of the Creed 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. . . . O God of the living and the dead, open our minds to the greatness of Thy Son, Jesus Christ, that we may never make His Gospel smaller than it is; help us to hope steadfastly in Thee, not only for ourselves, but for the whole race of men, for whom He died; and make us sure that all mankind shall see the glory which Thou hast revealed in Him." (*The Faith of the Church*, p. 62.) Friedrich Nietzsche: "Ueber den Ausgang des Gerichts an den Gottlosen ist schwer etwas auszusagen; ewige Verdammnis ist, weil infolge der menschlichen Freiheit kein Mensch zur Aufgabe seines Widerstandes und Ergreifung der Gnade gezwungen werden kann, ebenso moeglich wie die schliessliche Bekehrung aller Verlorenen." (See W. Oelsner, *Die Entwicklung der Eschatologie*, p. 53.) Seeberg's teaching is summarized by Oelsner (p. 75) thus: "Die Verdammnis aber als ewige anzusehen, verbieten schwere Bedenken: der Particularismus des Heils wuerde das Boese als wesentlich ewig in den Bereich des Gotteswillens hineinruecken; will aber der Allwirksame, dass das Boese ueberwunden werde, so darf er auch nicht ruhen, bis dieser Zweck so erfuehlt ist, dass endlich jeder Wille das Gute will." Just what does Bishop Stewart of Chicago teach as to eternal damnation? We read in *The Living Church*, March 10, 1934: "The recent questionnaire issued by a professor of Northwestern University dealing with a literal belief in a burning hell, the verbal inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures and the creation, is ridiculed by Bishop Stewart of Chicago, in a statement published in *The Diocese*. 'It is simply incredible that such questions should

be offered as tests of modernism,' says the Bishop. "They have nothing to do with what is technically known as modernism. One does not go about hoarsely and excitedly and modernistically announcing that the world is round and not flat. One does not toss back and forth at night feverishly asking whether he dare accept the new theory of Copernicus that the sun moves. We have always supposed that intelligent persons could accept their Lord's teaching about hell as about heaven without accepting the poetical scenery of sulphur and smoke on the one hand and pearly gates and golden streets on the other. For the past 50 years or so no intelligent clergyman of the Church has held a theory of verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. And no one with even a whiff of theological learning confuses the cosmic significance of the Eternal Logos with His mission as the Incarnate Jesus of Nazareth born of the Virgin Mary. Nor has the Church with its theories of the *poena sensus* and the *poena damni* ever dogmatized on the character of infernal combustion.'"

Some in this group teach both eternal damnation and apocatastasis. Peter Sterry, for instance, one of Cromwell's chaplains, a mystic, has this in his Catechism: "Q. What becomes of those who believe not in Christ? A. They lie under wrath while they live. Their souls are in prison with the devils at their death. At the end of the world their bodies are raised and joined to their souls; both are brought to judgment, both are cast into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone." The second part of the Catechism, however, uses somewhat different language, and in a letter to a friend he says: "Jesus Christ, as the universal Person, and Spirit in which all these subsisted, which alone truly subsisted in All, by dying, carried down the whole offended and polluted world into death; in that death all things are dissolved into their first principle, into the Divine Unity, into the Unity of the Eternal Spirit: Thus are the sins and the sinners no more for ever; thus all sins, sinners, wrath are swallowed up in the first unity of the Eternal Spirit, which is the fountain of Beauty, the fountain of Love." E. H. Plumptre, who quotes this, says: "These two extracts seem to contradict each other." (*The Spirits in Prison*, p. 193 f.)

Some in this group even go so far as to assert that Scripture itself teaches both doctrines—eternal damnation and

apocatastasis. H. Martensen, Bishop of Seeland, Denmark: "This antinomy meets us if we turn to Holy Scripture; no definite solution is given of it there. There are texts which, if they be taken in their full and literal import, most distinctly refer to eternal damnation. Matt. 25:41; Mark 9:44; Matt. 12:32; 1 John 5:16. These texts, if they be taken without reservation or refinement, clearly express the idea of a condemnation in which there is no cessation, to which there is no end. But on the other hand, there are contrasted expressions of Scripture, which have an equal claim to be taken in their full sense. 1 Cor. 15:26-28; Eph. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:22. If we take these texts without limiting their full and obvious import, we shall not be far from the idea of a universal restoration; for the apostle says expressly *all*, not some. Cp. Matt. 19:26. This apparent contradiction in the language of Scripture shows that Scripture itself does not afford us a final dogmatic solution of the question." (*Christian Dogmatics*, p. 475.) According to Martensen the Christian preacher would and should preach eternal damnation on one Sunday and on the following Sunday the final restoration of all men. P. Althaus follows the same line of thought. "Drei verschiedene Zukunftsbilder traegt die dogmatische Ueberlieferung uns zu: den dualistischen Ausgang in ewiges Leben und ewigen Tod, die Vernichtung der Heillosen und die Wiederbringung aller. . . . Es ist bezeichnend, dass jede der drei genannten Lehren Gedanken der Heiligen Schrift fuer sich anfuehren kann." He adds: "Die Lehre von der Apokatastasis oder Wiederbringung, wenn sie den Anspruch macht, erschöpfende Beschreibung des Endes zu sein, ist und bleibt Vorwitz." He also adds: "Wenn Gottes Erwaehlen den Glauben wirkt, wie sollte die Demut uns nicht gewiss machen, dass die Liebe Gottes jedes anderen sich ebenso annehmen wird wie unser! . . . Wir fluechten immer wieder zu der Gewissheit der gnaedigen Macht, die alle heimfuehrt." He concludes with the statement: "Gewiss kann nur das eine wahr sein," only one of these thoughts *expressed in Scripture* can be true. (*Die Letzten Dinge*, pp. 175—189.) And Folke Holmstroem calls this method of teaching both truths — "die Vorstellung eines doppelten Ausgangs" and "die zuversichtliche Hoffnung einer endlichen Wiederbringung aller" (Althaus, p. 186) a stroke of genius — "Althaus' genialer Griff." (*Das Eschatologische*

Denken der Gegenwart, p. 308.) Dr. Adolf Koeberle seems to have the same idea: "In the New Testament the two thoughts run parallel" (*op. cit.*, pp. 70—73). — See the item in *CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY*, 1937, p. 214 f.: "Bejaht die Schrift, was sie verneint?"²

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This apocatastasis gospel is a vicious teaching. It directly denies the plain teaching of Scripture. Holy Scripture tells the wicked, the unbelievers, that they shall be cast into the fire of hell, to suffer eternal damnation. Jesus will say to them on the Day of Judgment: "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:41, 46). Jesus spoke

² We submit some statements by infidels, atheists, agnostics, who deny not merely the eternity of damnation, but hell itself. Their violent language is fully matched by that of some of the liberal theologians. We are not classifying these with the atheists, but are calling attention to the similarity of language both groups employ. Bertrand Russell's book: "*Why I Am Not a Christian*" declares: "There is one very serious defect to my mind in Christ's moral character, and that is that he believed in hell. I do not myself feel that any person who is really profoundly human can believe in everlasting punishment. . . . Jesus goes on, in Matt. 13:42, about the wailing and gnashing of teeth. It comes in one verse after another, and it is quite manifest to the reader that there is a certain pleasure in contemplating wailing and gnashing of teeth or else it would not occur so often." (Quoted in Sydney Cave, *op. cit.*, p. 145.) On the occasion of Luther Burbank's funeral in 1926, at which in compliance with his wish the famous tribute of Robert Ingersoll at the grave of the great agnostic's brother was read, the papers reported: "Appearing in the pulpit of the First Congregational Church in San Francisco, Burbank declared he had 'nominated himself an "infidel" so as to cause people to think.' . . . The idea that a good God would send people to a burning hell is utterly damnable to me. The ravings of insanity; superstition gone to seed. I don't want to have anything to do with such a God. I am a lover of men and Christ as a man and his work, and all things that help humanity, but nevertheless, just as he was an infidel then, I am an infidel today." David Friedrich Strauss: "Das Jenseits ist der letzte Feind, welchen die spekulative Kritik zu bekaempfen und womoeglich zu ueberwinden hat." (See A. Hoencke, *Ev.-Luth. Dogmatik*, IV, p. 311.) "Mark Twain makes Satan reproach God as one who 'mouths justice and invented hell; mouths mercy and invented hell; . . . mouths morals to other people and has none himself; . . . frowns upon crimes, yet commits them all.'" William Adams Brown quotes this in *Beliefs That Matter*, p. 285, in this connection: "There is, for example, the doctrine of everlasting punishment. . . . But this doctrine of retribution, morally defensible and even necessary as it is, was associated with a conception of future punishment so appalling both in its quality and in its duration as to make the thought of the future a nightmare for many sensitive spirits. . . . We can understand the bitterness with which Mark Twain makes Satan, etc. Much may be lost with the loss of the life after death. At least we are delivered from the hell of our fathers."

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through His Prophet: "Many shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:2). Jesus declared in the days of His earthly ministry: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). "It is better for thee to enter life with one eye rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. It is better for thee to enter life halt or maimed than having two eyes to be cast into everlasting fire . . . into the fire that shall never be quenched, where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched" (Matt. 18:8-9; Mark 9:42-48). Jesus, who will have all men to be saved, had His holy Apostles write these words: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. 1:7-9). And these words: "To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever" (Jude 13). And these words: "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever . . . tormented day and night forever and ever" (Rev. 14:11; 20:10). St. John exhausts the resources of the human language to express the concept of the endlessness of damnation: "εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων," "for the aeons of the aeons," "von Ewigkeit zur Ewigkeit" (Luther). And there is Heb. 9:27! Man's eternal fate is not decided at some period in the aeons of eternity, but at the moment of his death.³ — "Scripture teaches the fact of eternal damnation so clearly and emphatically that no one can deny it unless he rejects the authority of Scripture." (F. Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik*, III, p. 611.) And Delitzsch writes: "There is no

³ Under the compulsion of Holy Scripture the Athanasian Creed confesses: "They that have done good shall go into life everlasting; and they that have done evil, into everlasting fire. This is the catholic faith," the creed of Christendom. And the Augsburg Confession, Art. 17: "They condemn the Anabaptists, who think that there will be an end to the punishments of condemned men and devils." And the Apology: "Christ shall condemn the ungodly to be punished with the devil without end." And the Large Catechism: "They abide in eternal wrath and damnation." (*Triglotta*, p. 697.) And the Westminster Confession, Chapter 33: "The wicked, who know not God and obey not the Gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal torments and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power." And the Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 52: "Who shall cast all His and my enemies into everlasting condemnation," etc.

teaching which flouts Holy Scripture more flagrantly than the apocatastasis." (*Biblische Psychologie*, p. 412. See *Proceedings, Texas Dist.*, 1907, p. 51.)

There are those among the restorationists who admit that Scripture teaches eternal damnation, but openly declare that they do not accept Scripture as the authoritative Word of God. Theodore Parker readily acknowledged that eternal punishment is taught in the New Testament. He declared: "There is no doubt that Jesus Christ taught the endless suffering of the wicked. But I do not accept the doctrine on His authority." (See *The Bible Companion*, October, 1922, p. 383.) He would not accept it because it "sneers at common sense, spits upon reason and makes God a devil." Charles Eaton, who denounces this teaching as "blasphemous," goes on to say: "God is immanent in human nature also. . . . God has never left Himself without a witness. Inspiration is not and cannot be confined to any favored or selected prophets. . . . To limit revelation to the Bible is to finally destroy religion." (*Why I Am*, p. 68.) Lewis B. Fisher (Universalist), who declares that this doctrine "made the universe a chamber of horrors and a madhouse for countless sensitive people," that "theology should not make the universe an insane asylum and God hateful," also says: "We, with all Protestants, have affirmed the liberty of each soul to think for itself, itself to judge what is truth, to follow its 'inner light,' accountable to no human authority, but to God only," and, "Jesus never wrote a word, and never asked any one else to do so. All we know is what his reporters have handed to us, in reports written from fifty to a hundred years after his birth." (*Which Way?* Pp. 15, 66, 118, 124.) This book is "a plain statement of what Universalists are believing now, in this new age, with its new Bible, its new science . . . its new theology." (Preface.) Dr. S. Shepard, quoted above, says: "Such details as the origin and nature of the Bible, the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus are matters upon which each individual must form his own opinions, probably changing them from time to time." (See Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 199.) "Archbishop Tillotson saw reason to believe that God might restore the lost by the superabundance of His mercy, though he considered that the letter of Scripture pointed the other way." (See Farrar, *op. cit.*, p. 175.) Archdeacon Storr, quoted above, says: "The

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older traditional belief in hell and in endless punishment was based upon a literal acceptance of certain passages in the Bible. But the growth of modern Biblical scholarship has profoundly altered our view of inspiration. We no longer feel that a statement is necessarily true because it is in the Bible." (*Op. cit.*, p. 208.)

The conservatives among the restorationists will not, of course, use such coarse language. They recognize the authority of Scripture. But at this point they refuse to bow to the authority of Scripture. Anyone who in the face of the clear statement of Scripture that "these shall go away into everlasting punishment" insists that no man will suffer everlasting punishment, is certainly not bowing to the authority of Scripture. While the left wing openly declares that the authority of Scripture may be rejected, the right wing, which stands for the authority of Scripture, is virtually brushing it aside. The only difference between the two wings is that the left wing denies more, many more, Scriptural truths than the right wing. F. S. Downs is right in saying: "Better renounce the authority of the Bible at once than trifle in this way with its most solemn fact." (*The Heart of the Christian Faith*, p. 200.)

True, most restorationists deny that they are rejecting the authority of Scripture and insist that Scripture does not teach the endlessness of damnation. A few, indeed, as we have pointed out above, admit that Scripture plainly teaches it, but the great majority claim that neither Jesus nor any of His Apostles taught it. L. B. Fisher: "No candid person can believe that the doctrine of endless hell torments is taught in the Bible. . . . The Bible, rightly understood, is a Universalist book. . . . It is worth noting that the Bible never once spoke of everlasting death, or everlasting hell." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 68, 74, 95.) Farrar: "The silence of St. Paul as to any such doctrine in such passages as Rom. 2: 8-9; 5: 21; 6: 23; Gal. 5: 21; 6: 8; Phil. 3: 18-19; the reticence of St. John in such passages as 1 John 3: 14-15; 5: 16 — in all which places the nature of the subjects handled would have led the Apostles to make explicit mention of endless torment, had they embraced any such belief — cannot by any possibility be the result of accident. "That the doctrinal writings of these three chief teachers of the Gospel (St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. John)

are wholly destitute of any assertion of the endless misery of sinners in the literal sense,' says Mr. White, 'can be verified by every reader.'" (*Op. cit.*, p. 218 f.) "It seems to me that . . . endless torments are nowhere clearly taught—the passages which appear to teach that doctrine being either obviously figurative or historically misunderstood." (*Op. cit.*, p. 227.) In the *Christian Century* of Jan. 7, 1934, Prof. H. L. Willett answered the question: "Does it not seem a strange and repellent idea that Jesus should have given his sanction to the Jewish doctrine of eternal punishment? I am thinking particularly of his references to the 'fire that is not quenched,' 'these shall go away into everlasting punishment,'" thus: ". . . His primary purpose was not the portrayal of the future life. He never issued a blueprint dealing with that subject. . . . He used the Jewish figures of speech or the framework of the picture, but went straight to the heart of the matter by his insistence that as long as willful evil persists in the disposition of any life, there will be the consequent suffering." The *Pulpit Commentary* on Luke 16:19 ff.: "Between a soul thus godless and the holy dead, who are at rest in the Lord, there is a great gulf fixed. But to press this into an argument for a hell of endless torment is to overstep the limits of parabolic interpretation." (P. 74.)⁴ Sydney Cave relies upon Higher Criticism to prove the thesis that the Bible does not teach eternal damnation. In answer to B. Russell, who had quoted Matt. 13:42 to show "the serious defect in Christ's moral character" (see above), he writes: "The words of Jesus which he (B. R.) claims teach everlasting punishment are, indeed, perplexing, and on them have been based terrific theories which contradict our Lord's central teaching of the unwearying, holy love of God. Mr. Russell deals with the passages on the lines of the crudest and most ignorant fundamentalism, and ignores altogether the difference between the earlier and more authentic version of these sayings in St. Mark and St. Luke and that given in St. Matthew, which, as we have seen, represents the harsher teaching of Palestinian Christianity; actually this phrase ('wailing

⁴ On page 81, however, we read: "Jesus Christ was using current language and familiar imagery to intimate to us that the man who has lived a selfish and worldly life will meet with severe condemnation and grievous penalty in the next world, a penalty in regard to which he has no right to expect either mitigation or release."

and gnashing of teeth'), though found six times in Matthew, is not found in Mark and only once in Luke. And he treats as genuine sayings which, as even a glance at the Revised Version margin would have told him, 'are omitted by the best ancient authorities' (Mark 9:44-46)." (*Op. cit.*, p.176. — We don't understand. The marginal note in the American Standard Version and in the Revised Standard Version reads: "Verses 44 and 46: 'where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched' — *which are identical with verse 48* — are omitted by the best ancient authorities. Would not verse 48 make the saying genuine?) — There is nothing to the plea that Scripture often uses figurative language in describing the eternal things. In the nature of the case Scripture is compelled to use much figurative language. Moreover, there is nothing obscure about such figurative language as "their worm dieth not." Besides, Scripture employs a lot of language which is not figurative. Every single word in the statement: "The wrath of God abideth on him" must be taken in the most proper sense. Not a single word in the statement: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment" is a figurative expression. — No, the Apostles did not always, in describing the future punishment, add the adjective "endless." They used that word often enough elsewhere. And Paul found the words "indignation," "wrath," "tribulation," "anguish" sufficiently strong for the purpose at hand. It is a good thing that Farrar himself, as he wrote his books, did not apply the law he lays down for the Apostles. — No comment is necessary on Cave's and the Higher Critics' manipulation of Scripture.

Scripture does not teach eternal damnation, say the restorationists, for the word αἰώνιος, translated "eternal," does not mean what the Greek scholars and the Greek laymen, the English scholars and the English laymen, have always understood it to mean — everlasting, endless, eternal. They consider this one of their strongest points. They write long chapters on it. The word, when used in connection with damnation, punishment, hell, can only mean "for a certain period," never an infinite period. We read in *Which Way?*: "The third word that Canon Farrar declared should be expunged from our English Bible is the word 'everlasting.' Presumably he meant that that word should not be applied to sin and to its punishments as necessarily meaning endless."

(P. 95. — The two other words are “hell” and “damnation.”) “The true version of Matt. 25:46 is: “These shall go away into the punishment of the ages, and the righteous into the life of the ages.” (P. 97.) “As to ‘everlasting,’ while it was many times applied to life and to salvation, it is worth noting that the Bible never once spoke of everlasting death, or everlasting hell.” (P. 95.) Farrar: “It has been so ably proved by so many writers that there is no authority whatever for rendering aeonian ‘everlasting,’” “Jeremy Taylor declared that the word ‘everlasting’ signifies only to the end of its proper period.” (*Op. cit.*, p. 62, 197.) Koeberle: “Zinzendorf, Bengel, und Blumhardt haben darauf hingewiesen: das neutestamentliche Wort *aionios*, das wir gern mit ‘ewig’ uebersetzen und wodurch die Kirche zu der Lehre von einer ewigen Verdammnis gekommen sei, dieses Wort bedeute in Wahrheit ja: einen Weltalter-Abschnitt lang waehrend.” (*Op. cit.*, p. 72.)

That will not do. In the language of the world and in the Bible our word sometimes means “enduring for a long period,” but usually it means “endless, enduring forever and ever — eternal.” There cannot be a moment’s doubt that when Scripture declares that the unbeliever shall receive “everlasting” punishment, it means “everlasting,” for it uses the same word when it speaks of the “eternal” life, which receives believers at the end of the present aeon. “These shall go away into everlasting (*αἰώνιον*) punishment, but the righteous into life eternal (*αἰώνιον*)” (Matt. 25:46). The restorationists, since they are not materialists, believe in the life eternal. They have no trouble with Matt. 25:46 b. But it surely troubles them when their theory compels them to make the “everlasting” in Matt. 25:46a mean a period which will come to an end. In the words of *The Australian Lutheran*: “Holy Scripture teaches the *endlessness* of this conscious suffering in hell. Objectors say that the word translated *eternal*, *everlasting*, literally means nothing more than age-long, long time. But let the reader note that the word *aionios* (eternal, everlasting) is used of the future life of the believer, of God’s own being, of the blessings of the Gospel. In all these cases even our opponents do not think of limiting its duration. Six times it is used of the punishment of the wicked (Matt. 18:8; 25:41, 46; Mark 3:29; 2 Thess. 1:9; Jude 7). What valid

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reason is there for arbitrarily limiting its duration here? To limit its duration in Matt. 25:46, where the same word is used for the reward of the righteous, is impossible. . . . 'Forever and ever' in Rev. 20:10 literally means 'unto the ages of the ages,' that is, age rolling upon age in endless succession." (See the *Lutheran Witness*, 1939, p. 165.) Otto von Gerlach, who is for the Hades gospel, writes: "The same adjective is used in describing 'punishment' and 'life.' Augustine says, *De Civ. Dei*, XXI:23: 'How is it possible to account eternal punishment to be a fire of long duration, and eternal life to be without end, since Christ comprised both in the very same passage, in one and the same sentence, saying, "These shall go into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal?"' If both are eternal, either both must be understood to be lasting with an end or both perpetual without end. For like is related to like; on the one side eternal punishment, on the other, eternal life. But to say in one and the same sentence, life eternal shall be without end, punishment eternal shall have an end, were too absurd; hence, since the eternal life of the saints shall be without end, punishment eternal too shall doubtless have no end to those whose it shall be." (*Das Neue Testament mit erklärenden Anmerkungen*, p. 160.) And Archdeacon Storr, who is at heart for the apocatastasis gospel, writes: "Whatever may be the meaning of 'aeonian,' we must note that the word is used in the New Testament of the fate both of the good and the bad, and we cannot logically give it one meaning in one case, and a different meaning in the other case. We may revolt against the idea of endless punishment; but if we are basing our argument upon the meaning of special words, we must remember that the same adjective is used of both life and penalty." (*Op. cit.*, p. 229.)⁵

⁵ We have space for a few more statements. Professor Moses Stuart: "If then the words *aion* and *aionios* are applied sixty times in the New Testament to designate the continuance of the future existence of the righteous and at least twelve times to designate the continuance of the future misery of the wicked, by what principle of interpreting language does it become possible for us to avoid the conclusion that *aion* and *aionios* have the same sense in both cases? The result seems to me to be plain and philologically and exegetically certain. It is this — we must either admit the endless misery of hell or give up the endless happiness of heaven." (See *The Bible Champion*, Oct., 1922, p. 383.) *The Pulpit Commentary*, on Matt. 18:8-9: "Everlasting fire. . . . It is not morally expedient to minimize the force of such terms by disputing about the exact connotation of 'aeonian.' When we remember that the words are spoken by the loving and pitiful Savior, we must allow that

Then, too, the paraphrastic terms used Mark 9:43-46: "Their worm dieth not," "The fire shall never be quenched," and Rev. 14:11: "The smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever," and John 3:36: "The wrath of God abideth on him," force us to take *aionion* punishment to mean 'unending' damnation. And, finally, the very nature of the coming aeon, as distinguished from the present aeon, is timelessness, endlessness. Dr. A. L. Graebner says: "Αἰώνιος can here refer to but one aeon, the αἰὼν μέλλων, αἰὼν ἐκεῖνος, as it describes that which is to come at the end of the world, when the present aeon, αἰὼν οὗτος, shall be over and past. And the coming aeon is endless, eternity. And among the words that shall abide when heaven and earth shall pass away is also this: 'They shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.'" (*Theol. Quarterly*, 1902, p. 143.) And Jesus will speak these words at the *Last Judgment*. It will

they point to some dreadful reality." On Matt. 25:46: "Apparently Jesus meant to convey by these words the impression which every simple-minded, unbiased reader receives from them, that the duration of the punishment of the lost equals the duration of the blessedness of the saved. The word translated 'everlasting' in the one clause and 'eternal' in the other is the same in both clauses. . . . The bliss pronounced and the punishment threatened would be understood to last so long as the subject of them lasts unless explicit intimation were given that it would not be so." Dr. W. R. Inge, dean of St. Paul's, in his contribution to the symposium *What Is Hell?* puts it thus: "It is hardly too much to say that heaven and hell stand and fall together. Those who refuse to believe in the possibility of final reprobation will usually be found ready to secularize religion, and to substitute some dream of 'a good time coming' for the blessed hope of everlasting life. . . . It is then that we face the dread alternative, the choice which, so far as we know, is for us endless in its results." He has no patience with those who would try to make words like "eternal" mean anything else than eternal. (See *The Literary Digest*, April 5, 1930. *The Presbyterian*, June 5, 1930.) — Schaff-Herzog pronounces the verdict: "Whatever these words, κόλασις, αἰώνιον, may be made to mean under the stress of a theory" (our italics), the plain meaning which they carry upon their face is that which the Church has always put upon them. . . . These words (Matt. 25:46) cannot be explained away by speculation, or deprived of their obvious meaning by exegesis." — Kittel's *Woerterbuch*: "Im Neuen Testament wird αἰώνιος in der Bedeutung ewig gebraucht von Gott. Als Gottespraedikant enthaelt αἰώνιος nicht nur den Begriff der unbegrenzten anfangs- und endlosen Zeit, sondern zugleich den der die Zeit transzendierenden Ewigkeit. . . . In diesem Sinn wird es gebraucht von den goettlichen Guetern und Gaben — σωτηρία αἰώνιος, Heb. 5:9; Mark 16 (kurzer Schluss). . . . Enthaelt αἰώνιος in diesen Ausdruecken den vollen Begriff der goettlichen Ewigkeit, so bedeutet es in τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον, Matt. 18:8; 25:41; Jude 7; κόλασις αἰώνιος, Matt. 25:46, zunaechst nur niemals aufhoerend, endlos. Aber ein Ausdruck wie κόλαμα αἰώνιον, Heb. 6:2 . . . zeigt, dass auch hier das rein zeitliche Verstaendnis nicht ausreicht. Zum Gedanken der ewigen Strafe vergleiche Apk. 14:11; 20:10."

not be reversed at some later period. The αἰὼν μέλλων knows no change.

Does Scripture teach eternal damnation? Dr. E. B. Pusey, Canon of Christ Church, makes this significant statement: "They who deny that any of the words used of future punishment in Holy Scripture express eternity would do well to consider whether there is any way in which Almighty God *could* have expressed it, which they would have accepted as meaning it." (*What Is of Faith As to Everlasting Punishment?* p. 44. — A reply to Dr. Farrar's book.)⁶

The restorationists not only deny that Scripture teaches eternal damnation, but also assert that Scripture teaches the ultimate salvation of the damned. They quote Acts 3:21: "Until the times of restitution of all things."⁷ But the ἀποκατάστασις of Acts 3:21 a is the accomplishment of all the prophecies, as 21 b shows. That is corroborated by Matt. 17:11, which says that John the Baptist ἀποκαταστήσει πάντα.

⁶ We ought to hear what the restorationists offer in rebuttal. *Which Way?* disposes of our argument based on Matt. 25:46 thus: "They say that if eonian punishment is not endless then eonian life is not either. This strikes the Universalist as about as convincing an argument as it would be to assert that when a hat and a monument are both called 'high' they must therefore be the same height." (P. 100.) No comment. — Farrar asks those who argue from Matt. 25:46 "to apply identically the same argument, analogously, to such texts as 1 Cor. 15:22: 'As in Adam *all*' die, even so in Christ shall *all*' be made alive.'" (*Op. cit.*, p. 199.) And *Which Way?* thinks it is a very good argument. "Farrar challenged his critics, who insisted that the same word must always mean the same thing, to apply that opinion, if they dared to, to the text: 'As in Adam all die, etc.'" (P. 101.) Martensen presents the argument in about the same words. (*Op. cit.*, p. 476.) As it happens, the two "alls" in our text have the very same meaning: *all believers*. See the context. (Lanski on our passage; E. B. Pusey, p. 37, etc.) — In "*What Is Hell?*" Bishop J. E. C. Wellton says that Christ's words "can not be literally accepted; they are allegorical or metaphorical. . . . The simple fact that the future life is timeless is in itself enough to dispel the nightmare of everlasting punishment." Because eternity is timeless, the punishment may come to an end? Farrar has the same idea: "When you foist into this word αἰώνιος the fiction of endless time, you do but give the lie to the mighty oath of that great angel who . . . swore by Him who liveth for ever and ever that 'Time should be no more.'" (*Op. cit.*, p. 79.) *Hier steht einem der Verstand stille*. Eternity is timeless, absolutely. Timeless, therefore changeless. We cannot understand the reasoning that "timelessness" leaves room for a change in the condition of the damned.

⁷ Hosea Ballou: "The fulness of times will come and the times of the restitution of all things will be accomplished. Then shall universal songs of honor be sung to the praise of Him who liveth for ever and ever. . . . The blessed hand of the once Crucified shall wipe tears from off all faces. . . ." (See *Which Way?* p. 46.)

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(See Pieper, *op. cit.*, II, p. 457.) — They quote Rom. 5:18: "The free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." Yes, all men are justified objectively. But the text does not state that those who rejected universal justification in this life will finally, in hell, accept it. — They quote 1 Cor. 15:28. But this text only states that the enemies will be subjugated; it does not say that they will be converted to God and Christ. Just read v. 26! (See Hoenecke, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 309.) — They quote Phil. 2:10 f. What this text says is: "The first are all the blessed angels and the saints in heaven; the second are all the men on earth; the third are all the demons and the damned in hell. All shall bow in submission and make the acknowledgment or confession, either with joy and bliss or with dismay." (Lenski.) They quote, of course, 1 Cor. 15:22. But see above. — They quote Eph. 1:10. But the text speaks of those things that take place in "the fullness of times," the era of the New Testament (see Gal. 4:4), not of what takes place in the future world. (See Stoeckhardt on our passage. He quotes Hodge: "The inhabitants of heaven, or the angels, and the inhabitants of the earth, or the saints, are to be united as a harmonious whole under Christ.") — They quote 1 Pet. 3:19. (See *CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY*, 1945, p. 384. Knopf.) Christ preached eternal damnation to the spirits in prison. — They also quote Is. 24:22: "And after many days they shall be visited." But it will not be a gracious visitation. After many days will come the dread Day of Judgment. (See v. 23: "Visited" — A. V. margin: "Found wanting." Revised V.: "Punished." Moffatt: "Till their day of doom arrives." Weimar-Bibel: "Daher auch die alten Kirchenlehrer diesen Text auf den Juengsten Gerichtstag deuten.")

There is no Scriptural authority for the apocatastasis. On the contrary, "Scripture teaches the fact of eternal damnation so clearly and emphatically that no one can deny it unless he rejects the authority of Scripture."

The only way to save the apocatastasis would be to say with Archbishop Tillotson (see *Proceedings, Texas Dist.*, 1907, p. 45) that God indeed threatens the sinners with eternal damnation, not as though He intends to carry out the threat, but merely for the purpose of rousing them out of their spiritual apathy. — Nothing more is needed utterly to destroy the trustworthiness and authority of Scripture.

2

Restorationism is a wicked teaching in that it places reason above Scripture. It listens to the voice of carnal reason rather than to the voice of God. The chief argument for the apocatastasis gospel is based on the rationalistic consideration that God would dishonor and disgrace Himself if He consigned any of His creatures to everlasting damnation. With most of the restorationists the "Scripture" proof is of minor importance. What they stress is that God's mercy and His justice compel Him ultimately to quench the fires of hell. We must "save the glory and honor of God." God "is the God of grace." "Every soul will meet with justice." "The unwearying holy love of God cannot stand for "everlasting punishment." (See above.) "But endless punishment! Hopeless misery! I acknowledge my *inability* to admit this belief together with a belief in the divine goodness — the belief that 'God is love,' that 'His tender mercies are over all His works.'" (John Foster, quoted in Farrar, *op. cit.*, p. 204.) Dr. L. Schneller: "God in hell (Ps. 138:8) is still the God who would have all men to be saved. Or do you imagine that God is in hell only to take vengeance and to gloat over the agonies of the lost and the damned? He is there to save through the fire of judgment all that can possibly be saved." See CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY, 1936, p. 440.) The doctrine of eternal damnation is "blasphemous" (see above); it makes "God a devil." But all of this is rationalism, pure and simple.⁸

⁸ L. Schneller is an annihilationist. A word on annihilationism. "This theory of the final extinction of sinful and unyielding souls is the only possible rival of universalism," says *The Winchester Centennial*, p. 41. Both universalism and annihilationism denounce the idea of eternal damnation as incompatible with the mercy of God. The annihilationist Th. Traub: "Our Christian faith will not permit us to believe in the endlessness of the punishment in hell. As far as we can see, it is incompatible with God's love and with His justice. God's justice cannot permit Him to punish sins committed in time with tortures of unnumbered billions of years. And of what benefit is this endless punishment to God, and how does it benefit the damned? . . . Michael Hahn has well said: 'One who believes in endless damnation cannot rest at ease if he has one spark of God's love and mercy in his heart.'" (*Von den letzten Dingen*, p. 284f.) "Question: Do you think a benevolent God would consign a human soul to everlasting torment in hell? Answer: The expressions 'eternal punishment' and 'eternal fire' occur in parables and sayings of a symbolic character. . . . God wills not the death of a single sinner, but, rather, that all men should turn unto him and live. . . . The passages in question do not teach the endless torture of human beings, but rather the absolute extinction of willfully rebellious souls." (S. Parkes Cadman, *Answers to Everyday Questions*, p. 287.) A writer

It is a thought nowhere expressed in God's Word that God may not, because of His mercy and justice, punish the unbeliever with eternal damnation. This thought springs from corrupt human reason. Rationalism begets restorationism. Let reason be your guide, and you will inevitably land in restorationism or annihilationism. Luther: "This is what we come to when we attempt, by human reason, to limit and make excuses for God, not revering the secrets of His Majesty, but curiously prying into them. . . . We prate like madmen, both against God and against ourselves, when we are all the while supposing that we are, with a great deal of wisdom, speaking both for God and for ourselves. . . . Setting aside faith, reason wants to feel out, and see, and comprehend *how* He can be good and not cruel. But she will comprehend that, when this shall be said of God: "He hardens no one, He damns no one, but He has mercy upon all, He saves all; and He has so utterly destroyed hell that no future punishment need be dreaded. It is thus that reason blusters and contends, in attempting to clear God, and to defend Him as just and good." (*The Bondage of the Will*, pp. 217, 220. St. L. Ed. XVIII:1832. Cp. X:2002.) It is because they listen to their reason that men preach the apocatastasis gospel. They say so themselves, many of them. They ask us: Do you want us to "sneer at common sense and spit upon reason"? They glory in giving reason its rights.

But it is a wicked business. "Men derive this dogma from their reason, *their* sense of justice, *their* conception of mercy. And men have not the right to use the argument under discussion. For what it amounts to is this: reason presumes to tell God what He must do in order to retain His character as a merciful and just God. And shall reason teach God ethics? Presumptuous reason is telling God that unless He conducts His judgment according to human standards, His conduct would be unfair, partial, unrighteous, unethical. . . .

in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Oct., 1926, p. 405, and Jan., 1927, p. 59, declaring on the basis of the passages that speak of God's love that endless damnation is incompatible with the nature of God, says: "The horrid doctrine that so long has covered the benign face of the Deity with a black cloud of human creation, the doctrine of eternal torment . . . is utterly false." Other annihilationists: Socinians, Adventists, Russellites, C. Stange, Th. Zahn. The annihilationists believe in "merciful" extinction. The Scripture proof is 2 Thess. 1:9 ("everlasting destruction"); Rev. 20:14; and similar texts.

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Will a man judge God?" (CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY, 1945, p. 395.) These words were addressed to the Hades theologians, who demand, because of their "merciful" sentiments, that God must save half of the inmates of hell, Hades. They apply no less to the apocatastasis theologians, who because of their sense of "mercy and justice," require God to lead all the damned out of hell to heaven. And since the God of the Bible speaks a different language, they make out of the God of the Bible "a devil." Presumptuous reason will stop at nothing.

Reason blusters that a just God cannot punish the sinner with the damnation of hell. It is inconceivable that the rationalist would appeal to the justice of God in this connection, the divine justice and holiness of Him whose wrath is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness (Rom. 1:18), who will render to every man according to his deeds (Rom. 2:6), before whose judgment seat all must appear, that every one may receive the things done in his body (2 Cor. 5:10), whose judgment is righteous (2 Thess. 1:5-9; Acts 17:31), who will pronounce judgment without mercy (James 2:13). And if carnal reason will not listen to the terrible (2 Cor. 5:11: "the terror of the Lord") voice of God in Scripture, it should listen to the voice of conscience, which tells every man that he will be judged on the Last Day by Him who condones not one sin and cannot but execute the judgment of damnation against the unbeliever. Reason is unreasonable when it protests against the just judgment of God, for it can do so only by suppressing the voice of conscience and blinding itself. As long as men believe in a God and have a conscience, they cannot deny the reality of hell. Schaff-Herzog: "The fact of future retribution cannot *reasonably* be denied by any except those who hold a pantheistic or materialistic theory of the universe."

But reason blusters that it would be unjust on the part of God to punish a temporal sin eternally. Thus Th. Traub (see above). Archdeacon Storr: "Is it consonant with the Divine Love and justice that an eternity of woe should be the punishment for the wrong choices of a few years?" (*Op. cit.*, p. 210.) Bishop Thomas Newton: "To suppose that a man's happiness and misery to all eternity should absolutely and unchangeably be fixed and determined by the uncertain be-

havior of a few years in this life is an unreasonable supposition." (See Plumptre, p. 203. Cp. p. 199.) The trouble with carnal reason is that it has no conception of the enormity of sin and of the holiness of God. It will not even heed what the natural law, written in the heart of fallen man, says concerning the enormity of sin and the holiness of God. And on the findings of this blind reason restorationism and annihilationism dare to charge the Lord, "the righteous Judge," with injustice. Schaff-Herzog: "The objection that men deserve lenient treatment because of their disadvantages would be an argument against *any* if against *eternal* punishment. The objection that sins do not deserve eternal punishment assumes that we can measure the turpitude of sin."⁹

⁹ Carnal reason operates with a lot of additional arguments in support of its claim that it knows more about this matter than Scripture. For instance (1): "'If God succeeds,' says Dr. Gordon of Boston, one of the brightest minds among the Congregationalists, 'if God succeeds, universal salvation will be the result.'" (*The Winchester Centennial*, p. 40.) That means that Satan and man do not have the power to set themselves against the gracious will of God. And that means that the restorationists have no conception of the frightful nature of the corruption and evil in man and Satan. (2) "The great Physician' does not kill his patients in his efforts to cure them." (*Which Way?* p. 22.) There are patients who refuse the ministrations of the physician. There are sinners who put themselves beyond help. (3) Farrar: "It was the doctrine of endless torments which made an infidel of the elder Mill. . . . It was this, too, that chiefly made Theodore Parker a Unitarian." (*Op. cit.*, p. LVII.) Farrar is advising God to destroy hell because men hate the doctrine of hell. (4) Th. Zahn: "It is hardly conceivable that the children of God could enjoy eternal bliss if they knew that a hell full of tortured spirits existed eternally." (*Kommentar zum Neuen Testament*, on Rev. 21:8.) Th. Traub has the same notion, *op. cit.*, p. 286. Schleiermacher, too. (See C. Stange, *Das Ende aller Dinge*, p. 197.) How do the annihilationists and restorationists know that? (5) They say further that the doctrine of the eternal damnation of a part of mankind would involve Dualism and Dualism is inconceivable. Martensen: "Must this world's development then end in a Dualism?" (*Op. cit.*, p. 474.) C. Stange: "Schleiermacher has already shown why there cannot be a final Dualismus. . . . And Althaus acknowledges this when he says: 'Wir muessen vom Gottesgedanken aus Bedenken erheben gegen das dualistische Endresultat.'" (*Op. cit.*, p. 196f.) And thus a host of others. But all this talk is purely philosophical speculation. How are you going to prove it?—*The Winchester Centennial* offers this proof: "Endless hell would be a confession of God's failure, as though the Almighty should say, 'I can not cure your sin, but I can torment you forever.' . . . The Universalist faith is absolute belief in an adequate God, who is able to conduct his universe to the goal of his desires without inflicting an eternal catastrophe upon any of his creatures. . . . Universalism is faith in the success of God, the sure triumph of his righteousness and the eternal reign of his love." (*Op. cit.*, p. 146—148.) But see (1) Can you prove with philosophy that man does not have the fatal capacity to withstand God to the utmost, to the bitter end? We, forsaking philosophical argumentations, which are endless, follow Scripture and

declare that man has that fatal capacity. The history of mankind will end in Dualism. (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 1923, p. 232. *Conc. Theol. Monthly*, 1938, p. 576. Pieper, *op. cit.*, III, p. 612.) (6) "The Hades theologians never fail to quote the passages proclaiming the universality of redemption and the universality of God's gracious will." (*Conc. Theol. Monthly*, 1945, p. 391.) And these very same passages (2 Pet. 3:9; Ezek. 33:11; 1 Tim. 2:4, etc., etc.) are quoted by the Universalists. And they have much to say about the "universale Bestimmung des Christentums" (p. 384). And Seeberg declares that "damnation cannot last eternally because of the 'universality of salvation'; for if He who worketh all things really wills that the evil be vanquished, He cannot rest till this purpose is accomplished and finally every will wills the good." (See Oelsner, *op. cit.*, p. 75.) Surely, Christ redeemed all men, and God would have all men to be saved. It should follow from this that all men would accept the universal grace of God, but see (1) and (5). The bottomless wickedness of man frustrates the gracious purpose of God. (7) The punishment in hell, they say, is not retributive but reformatory. C. H. Eaton: "The doctrinal teaching of the Universalist Church is . . . (4): The certainty of punishment, having for its object the final recovery of all men." (See above.) "If the punishments of God have a loving and healing purpose, they must continue until that purpose is accomplished, and then must cease." (*Which Way?* p. 100.) "The infliction of punishment, which is purely retributive and in no sense disciplinary, is not consonant with the purposes of a God of love and moral character. . . . A merely retributive punishment is simply vengeance." (See Storr, *op. cit.*, p. 218.) These men know nothing of the divine penology as revealed in Scripture. And their knowledge of human penology is also faulty. *The Theological Quarterly*, 1902, p. 142f.: "To say that eternal punishment is incompatible with the purpose of punitive justice, the reform of the culprit, is an error based upon an error. Chastisement aims at the reform of the delinquent, punishment as such, never. It is not reformatory, but vindictive in its nature. Rom. 12:19: 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.' At the last day, the Son of man will come as a judge, not as a reformer. 2 Thess. 1:6-8: 'Recompense . . . taking vengeance.' Divine justice will not be put to shame by human justice, which is likewise vindictive where it is punitive." "Strafe ist in erster Instanz und recht eigentlich und wesentlich Ahndung des Boesen, die Heimzahlung der Schuld auf den Beschuldeten. Dass sich der Bestrafte bessert, ist eine reine Zufalligkeit, die uebrigens in den seltensten Faellen eintritt." (*Proceedings*, Texas Dist., 1907, p. 44.) Luther: "These fearful things will take place when Christ descends from heaven to give battle to His enemies, that is, to take vengeance on the wicked. . . . Es wird ein greulich, unerhoert Wetter sein, desgleichen nicht gewesen ist von Anbeginn der Welt." (VIII:1327, 1330.) (8) The restorationists and annihilationists enlist the principles of the experience-theology in their cause. C. Stange: "Wir haben fuer die ewigen Hoellenstrafen keine *Erfahrungsgrundlage*." (*Op. cit.*, p. 162.) Blumhardt declared that since he himself had experienced the great mercy of God he had to reject the thought of an eternal damnation for others as absurd. (See Oelsner, *op. cit.*, p. 97.) P. Althaus, as quoted above: "Since God chose us and gave us the saving faith, should not our humility give us the assurance that God will treat all the others as He treated us? We dare to entertain the confident hope not only of our salvation but of the final restoration of all." (*Op. cit.*, p. 186.) Since God's love found me and accepted me, who am no better than the others, I am certain that He will accept all. That sounds reasonable and logical. It appeals to our feeling. But Christian experience and human deductions from our experience are not a source of the Christian doctrine. The experience-theology is a form of rationalism. And carnal reason wants its deductions set above God's Word! (9) Carnal reason appeals to the teachings of evolutionism. J. J. Knap raises the charge that some restorationists do that. "Some people are so encased in the theory of

The Origenists are engaged in an evil business. "All their objections are born out of a *false* principle, out of the assumption that it is right and reasonable to make our human thoughts and considerations the judge of God's nature and work." (Pieper, *op. cit.*, III, p. 612.) And this assumption is born out of the wicked presumption of arrogant reason. Luther: "Nature and reason cannot bear it" (the thought of eternal punishment). "We are forbidden to judge of God's truth by our thoughts and feelings. These thoughts arise out of the ingrained presumption of human nature. . . . The eye of nature must be plucked out; es geht sonst ohne greuliche, gefaehrliche Aergernisse nicht ab." (X:2002 ff.) Reason leads men to commit the monstrous crime of sitting in judgment on God! "Derhalben ihnen zu raten ist, dass sie mit Gottes Gerichten unverworren bleiben." (*Ibid.*) Speaking of the Hades gospel, we said: "One particularly loathsome and wicked feature of rationalism is its arrogant assumption of the right to sit in judgment on God. Carnal reason considers itself as wise as God and dares to condemn God as He has revealed Himself in Scripture. It wants a God of its own making." (CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY, 1945, p. 605.) The apocatastasis gospel commits the same crime.

Another loathsome feature of rationalism is its espousal of Pelagianism. One who takes proud reason for his guide will inevitably, in the end, glorify the innate goodness of man. We are not saying that everyone who denies eternal damnation is a Pelagian; many obey reason on one point, but refuse to follow it all the way. But there are many who are consistent rationalists and advocate restorationism because of their Pelagianism. To them sin is a small matter (see above) and man a noble creature. The Unitarians believe in "the

evolution that they dream of an incessant process whereby mankind gradually climbs from lower to higher development, even from sin to holiness. . . . Even though we do not complete our development in this earthly life, the evolutionist is not disheartened. . . . In that unknown future the progress of development continues, soul life ripens and becomes more capable of living with God. No one is lost. After many ages everything will be all right. . . . This theory is repulsive to any one who fears the Lord." (*Life Beyond the Grave*, p. 169 ff.) P. Althaus raises the same charge. (*Op. cit.*, p. 176 f.) And Storr halfway admits the charge. "Our whole thinking is dominated by the conception of evolution. We no longer believe in . . . an eternal fixity of condition. . . . Our whole outlook on these questions [everlasting damnation] is changed. . . . The evolutionary view of the world reveals a process of advance through struggle." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 209—211.)

essential dignity and perfectibility of human nature." (See above.) Origen, the father of the restorationists, "taught the perpetual freedom of the will and therefore set no time-limits to the capacity for restoration." (See Plumptre, *op. cit.*, p. 135.) *The Winchester Centennial*: "All are worthy of that life; all are capable of it. . . . It carries with it a tremendous faith in man and belief in his capacities. . . . Universalism affirms that man is not a fallen being, a worm, a slave, a wreck, but a developing being who began low down and is on his way up — not a ruin, but a mine full of latent riches. His capacities are great. . . . God is not to be propitiated, but served and loved and enjoyed. . . . Holiness is an achievement of personal character; it exists only in and by personal achievement." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 35, 55, 144, 154.) And so we hear Walter Rauschenbusch declaring: "No man, in any human sense of justice, has deserved an eternity of hell." (See above.) And in *What Is Hell?* Sheila Kaye-Smith tells us: "Today men no longer sue for pardon, but claim immunity." (See *The Presbyterian*, Aug. 28, 1930.) — James D. Smart (Presbyterian): "So reasonable, so sane-minded, have we become that the idea of judgment or of a hell no longer has any place in our thoughts. . . . The idea grows that *everyone has a sufficient spark of good in him* so that God will be able eventually in some way to effect his salvation and bring him to paradise." (*What Man Can Believe*, p. 238. — Pastor Smart continues: "We are even told that any lesser view is incompatible with the love of God. Jesus will hardly be accused of being ignorant of the implications of the love of God, and yet there is no version of His teaching which has come down to us of which judgment and hell are not an integral part.")

3

The denial of eternal damnation is a vicious teaching, for "it engenders carnal security and may cause men to be eternally lost." These words were addressed to the preachers of the Hades gospel (*CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY*, 1945, pp. 611—614), who hold out the hope of final salvation to some of the inmates of Hades. They apply with double and tenfold force to the preachers of the apocatastasis gospel, which promises final salvation to all inmates of hell. It dulls the terrible threats of God and lulls the awakened conscience into peaceful,

into fatal sleep. When the conscience of the natural man accuses him of sin and threatens him with the coming Judgment (Rom. 2:14-16), the preachers of the "wider hope" advise him not to take sin so seriously and to rid himself of these old superstitions. And when God sharpens his conscience and tells him: "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 5:23), and: "He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire" (Matt. 3:12), and: "He that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16), and: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:7-9), and: "Woe unto them . . . to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever" (Jude 13), they tell him: "God does not mean that; yea, hath God said that? Ye shall not surely die.—The natural man and the flesh of the Christian want to be told that he is not so bad and hell is not so bad as the conscience and God's Word says,¹⁰ and they are ready to tell the criminal that his case looks good. The natural man and the flesh of the Christian beg them: "Speak unto us smooth things" (Is. 30:10), and get the consoling answer: "The old evil word 'hell' should be left out of our vocabularies." " 'Damnation'—what a profane word to permit in a modern book." (*Which Way?* pp. 88—89.) And when the Christian preacher speaks of hell, damnation, W. R. Inge cries out: "Lutheranism worships a God who is neither just nor merciful" (See *The Churchman*, Oct. 15, 1944), and John Henry Lehn declares: "Lutherans believe in an infinite monster for a god."¹¹ Where such things are preached, no man can—unless God in His mercy intervenes—escape eternal damnation.

There are Hades theologians who warn the apocatastasis theologians of the fatal result of their teaching. Gerlach: "Another and worse perversion is the doctrine of the restitu-

¹⁰ J. E. Conant: "*Hell is an unspeakable reality!* And yet there are always those who refuse to believe in the justice of hell. It is only those, however, in whose hearts there is the spirit of criminals against God's government. And it is a matter of common observation that no criminal is fit to judge of the justice of the law he has broken, for he is always prejudiced in his own favor." (*No Salvation Without Substitution*, p. 98.)

¹¹ Prof. John Schmidt answered: "The Lutheran Church takes seriously the fact and consequence of sin. And that is why it proclaims so emphatically the blessed Gospel of forgiveness through God's grace." (See *The Christian Century*, March 8, 1944.)

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tion of all things, of the ultimate deliverance of the devils and the wicked from hell; Scripture everywhere rejects such a doctrine. . . . Woe unto him who delays his repentance." (*Op. cit.*, p. 565.) Farrar: "If any hardened sinner, shamefully loving his sin and despising the long-suffering of his Savior, *trifle* with that doctrine, it is at his own just and awful peril. . . . I earnestly ask your whole attention while I re-de you beware how you wrest God's mercy to your own ruin." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 88, 130.) J. Paterson-Smyth: "A man who presumes recklessly on chances in the future is taking terrible risks." (*The Gospel of the Hereafter*, p. 146.) And the restorationists themselves feel that their doctrine is dangerous. Some of them declare that it must not be preached publicly. And others protest that they, too, are proclaiming the wrath of God against sin; they thereby admit that the sinner needs to be warned. But failing to preach the full wrath of God, they are putting their hearers into the danger of eternal damnation.¹²

¹² "J. A. Bengel believed the doctrine of the apocatastasis, but thought it dangerous to teach." (Schaff-Herzog, *s. v.* Apokatastasis.) "His biographer said: 'Wer von der Apokatastasis Einsicht hat und sagt es aus, der schwaetzet aus der Schule.'" (See Traub, *op. cit.*, p. 273.) Traub also quotes Samuel Keller: "Some restorationists hold to the present day that it may be taught in the closed circle of advanced Christians, but must not be proclaimed publicly." Some go so far as to assert that God Himself wants this doctrine treated as an esoteric doctrine—*Geheimlehre*. "They allege that the doctrine of eternal punishment is only *regulative*, and that God has not made plain His purpose to save all men ultimately, because He wishes men to feel the legitimate influence of the doctrine of eternal punishment." (Schaff-Herzog, *s. v.* Punishment.)—Koeberle says: "We will have to admit that the restorationists never intended to tone down the severity of God's judgments against the sinner." (*Op. cit.*, p. 72.) Well, this is how the Universalist enforces the severity of God's wrath: "Universalism may be taught in such a way as to minimize the heinousness of sin. If all is to be well in the long run, does it matter much what use we make of our present opportunities? But this is to misunderstand the nature of the doctrine which rightly interpreted makes the process of final restoration long and difficult. Chastisement, discipline, purgation will be needed to burn away the dross and leave the pure gold of purified character. The impenitent sinner will only be saved so as by fire." (*Op. cit.*, p. 222.) These Universalists claim that they have done their duty by the impenitent by proclaiming at least half an eternity of damnation. And H. E. Fosdick claims that he has sufficiently warned the impenitent by restricting "damnation" to this life. In a sermon published in *The Christian Century*, Dec. 4, 1935, he said: "Modernistic Christianity largely eliminated from its faith the God of moral judgment. To be sure, in the old theology, the God of moral judgment had been terribly presented so that little children did cry themselves to sleep at night for fear of him and of his hell. Modernism, not content with eliminating the excrescences of a harsh theology, became softer yet and created the general impression

The 42d of the *Articles of Religion* reads: "All men shall not be saved at length. — They also are worthy of condemnation who endeavor at this time to restore the dangerous (*periculosum*) opinion that all men, be they never so ungodly, shall at length be saved when they have suffered pains for their sins a certain time appointed by God's justice." It disappeared in the Revision of 1563 (Thirty-Nine Articles). But it spoke the truth. The apocatastasis imperils men's salvation. J. Ruskin said that the denial of hell is the "most dangerous, because the most attractive, form of modern infidelity." (The restorationists do not deny the existence of hell, but they deny its eternity. And such a hell is no longer hell.)

The men who preach this form of unbelief are known as the "merciful" theologians. "*Misericordes doctores*" (Quenstedt), "*nostris misericordes* — our party of pity" (Augustine). They glory in that name. *The Winchester Centennial* speaks of the "Merciful Doctors" of the early Church (p.40) and Farrar of "these merciful opinions" (*op. cit.*, p.157). It is, however, not a merciful, but a cruel theology which refuses to warn the sinner of the fatal result of unbelief. It tends to frustrate the merciful design of God to bring all sinners to repentance and thus becomes a contributory cause of the eternal damnation of many. The gospel of the Eternal Hope is a gospel of death.

The merciful theologians are those who denounce eternal damnation against the unbeliever. It is not an easy thing to do that. We, too, would like to preach restorationism, or, at least, annihilationism. Satan and our flesh are raising the disturbing thought that eternal damnation does not accord with the mercy and love of God. But mercilessly we pluck

that there is nothing here to fear at all. . . . But there are things here to dread. Ask the physicians. They will tell us that in a law-abiding world are stern conditions whose fulfillment involves bodily destiny. Ask the economists. They will tell us there are things to dread which lead to an inevitable economic hell. Underline this: *Sin is real*. Personal and social sin is as terribly real as our forefathers said it was, no matter how we change their way of saying it. And it leads men and nations to damnation as they said it did, no matter how we change their way of picturing it." "*Which Way?*" takes "the Orthodox world" to task for "suspecting that Ballou's Universalism made light of sin." (P. 45.) To be sure, Ballou taught that sin will be punished in hell — but not eternally, and Fosdick teaches that sin leads to a hell in this life. But thereby these men do minimize the heinousness of sin; they induce men to make light of the earnest warnings of God and lead them into eternal damnation.

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out the eye of reason and mercilessly tell the unrepentant sinner of the terrible judgments of God.¹³ Mercilessly we suppress our faltering flesh and remind ourselves of the awful doom pronounced by God upon the watchman who, when God says to the wicked: "Thou shalt surely die!" does not give him warning (Ezek. 3:17-20). Men implore us to delete that offensive paragraph out of Article XVII of the Augsburg Confession. We turn a deaf ear to them and refuse to delete out of the Bible the words: "God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, He will whet His sword. He hath bent His bow and made it ready" (Ps. 7:11-12). Mercilessly we tell the secure sinner that he will be judged "without mercy" (James 2:13). And such preaching is dictated by true mercy. In no other way can the sinner be saved from eternal damnation. It is the loving, merciful Savior who warns us of eternal damnation. He teaches this dread truth because He wants to save us, save all men from hell. As often as we read the word "hell" in the Bible, we see God's heart yearning after the salvation of the sinner. "Scripture teaches the dread truth of eternal damnation for the purpose of warning against unbelief of the Gospel, of warning against carnal security, and of saving men from eternal damnation." (Pieper, *op. cit.*, p. 617.)¹⁴

¹³ We know that the light of heaven will show us that everything that God does is in accord with His eternal love. But our carnal reason does not like to wait that long for the solution of the difficulty and would harmonize God's love and God's justice now. Mercilessly we suppress this wicked impatience and say with Luther: "Reason rebels at being kept in ignorance. Satan makes it his business to stir up this dissatisfaction of the flesh, for he knows that it is faith's most noble and precious quality that in this case it closes its eyes and willingly abstains from these investigations. . . . It knows that God is the highest goodness and justice, even though to all appearance, according to reason, sense, and experience, there is nothing but wrath and injustice. Pluck out completely the eye of nature. . . . Do not meddle in God's judgments!" (X:2003.)

¹⁴ Some relevant statements: "There is something in us which is impressed by these arguments (against eternal damnation). But there is that which always keeps us from yielding to them: the fear of God's Word. God's Word speaks differently of this matter than our reason would like to speak of it. And the Holy Ghost, who is in us, who has created faith in the Word and preserves it in us, ever and always grants our faith the victory over our reason and gives us the strength to submit obediently to the teaching of God and to 'cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God'" (2 Cor. 10:5). (*Proc.*, Texas Dist., 1907, p. 51.) "We cannot give up the doctrine of hell, for it is one of the truths God revealed to us. . . . One who denies hell will in the end deny Christ, who for us was the plagues

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It is the sacred duty of the Christian minister to warn against the dangerous doctrine of the apocatastasis—and against any teaching that serves its interest. The Hades gospel does that. We have pointed that out in a preceding article. But now, having taken a close look at restorationism, we are in a position to make a few additional remarks. One detects at once the close family resemblance between the Hades gospel and the apocatastasis gospel. And it becomes clear that they are fighting for a common cause. Both apply the same principles and operate with the same arguments. The only difference is that the Hades people do not apply the common principles as consistently as the restorationists. But they are fighting the battle of the restorationists. The Hades gospel prepares the way for the apocatastasis gospel.

and destruction of hell. He that does not believe in hell cannot believe in Christ; but he that believeth not will be damned. We hold fast to the doctrine of hell. By it we measure the magnitude of our sin. What a terrible thing sin must be, since God punishes it so severely! By it we measure the unspeakable greatness of the love of our Savior. If we would rightly know what our Savior did for us, we need only contemplate hell. Then we will rejoice: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (*Ev.-Luth. Gemeindeblatt*, 30. Nov., 1930.) John A. W. Haas: "*Hell and the Devil*. What impossible words these are! . . . Some Lutheran pulpits still preach the whole counsel of God. Is this true of all? But the final question remains, namely, are these doctrines 'morally indefensible'? They do not fit into a morality which has reduced sin to sickness, or has made it merely the weakness of finite beings, or has taken it to be partial righteousness. But such a morality is the destruction of ethical progress. Its minimizing of sin makes the sinner comfortable in his transgression. The awful consequences of sin are forgotten. . . . The modernistic, sociological woman preacher, Maud Royden, has even dared to say that Christ made nothing of sin. The question might be asked: What sort of a New Testament does Miss Royden use? . . . The negation of these doctrines, which are a part of a consistent Christian system of truth, also degrades the love of God. It turns divine love into weak sentimentality. The fact is forgotten that divine love is such just because it is holy. God would not love us for our salvation if He condoned sin. Because He hates sin, and His wrath is upon it, He loves us. The ultimate destiny of punishment for men is not His will, but the consequence . . . of the choice of the evil. This position is the best Christian religion and the best morality. To it we shall be compelled to return after we have sobered up from the modernistic intoxication." (See *The Lutheran*, Jan. 30, 1930.) C. E. Macartney: "One great truth of the Christian revelation, future punishment, perplexes me more than it did in youth. . . . Yet more and more I see that this is an essential doctrine of the Christian faith. I have read the writings of those who speak about the 'larger hope' and who make future retribution a figure of speech, but I must always go back to the fact that it was Jesus Himself, the Savior, who took little children upon His arms and blessed them and who so loved the world as to suffer and die for it, who spoke the most, and the most solemnly, on this." (See *The Christian Century*, March 8, 1939.)

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1. The chief argument for the Hades gospel is based on the mercy and justice of God. Traub: "The love and righteousness of God demand that every man get the opportunity to decide for or against Christ, either in this life or after this life." (*Op. cit.*, p. 91.) And the chief argument of the restorationists is that "God is an infinite Father," "that this is a universe of absolute justice" (see above). The restorationists thank the Hades theologians for defending this principle and only deplore that they do not apply it to all men.

2. The Hades theology stresses "the universality of Christ's atonement." (*The Gospel of the Hereafter*, p. 61.) Farrar insists that "the Hades gospel is impregnably built upon the rock of an entire belief in Christ's infinite Redemption." (*Op. cit.*, p. LXV.) The restorationists stress the same "universality of salvation" (see above) and wonder why their allies, the Hades theologians, do not make this "universality" cover all men in hell. — Both groups believe, and strengthen each other in the fixed idea, that "this world's development cannot end in a Dualism."

3. S. Barney-Gould quotes 1 John 3:8, and declares, "Surely, if eight ninths of the men and women born into this world are to perish everlastingly, then Satan would have triumphed, Christ will have failed to destroy his works." (*The Restitution of All Things*, p. 38.) The Universalists say: That is a good point. "Endless hell would be a confession of God's failure. . . . Universalism is faith in the success of God." (See above.)

4. Plumptre declares that "the punishments of God are remedial and reformatory." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 147, 165.) And the restorationists make the most of this, more of it than Plumptre does. "If the punishment of God have a loving and healing purpose, they must continue until that purpose is accomplished and then must cease." (See above.)

5. Farrar's argument for his theory that some will be saved in the hereafter is that "there is no authority whatever for rendering aeonian 'everlasting.'" The Universalists were quick to take over this argument and made the logical deduction that hell will not last forever. (See above.)

6. The Hades theologians have a high regard for Origen. "The noblest, loftiest, most loving teacher of the ancient Church

(I am not afraid to speak thus of Origen) embraced it — that larger hope — almost as the author of his soul." (Plumptre, *op. cit.*, p. 13.) They are willing to follow him half of the way. The restorationists have the same high regard for Origen and follow him all the way.

7. Both the Hades theologians and the apocatastasis theologians make the doctrine of endless damnation responsible for the spread of infidelity. The only difference is that the former hold that the remedy would be to teach that damnation will end for some and the latter, that damnation will end for all.

8. Plumptre holds that "the teaching of the New Testament tends, in not a few passages, to the thought of an universal restoration." (*Op. cit.*, p. 125.) The restorationists insist that the New Testament definitely and expressly teaches it.

9. The fundamental thesis of the Hades gospel "may be summed up in the single sentence — That God's mercy may extend beyond the grave; that, as Fronmueller said, 'the ways of God's salvation do not necessarily terminate with earthly life.'" (Farrar, *op. cit.*, p. XII.) This foundation proved strong enough to bear the whole superstructure of the apocatastasis gospel.

10. The fundamental principle of the Hades theology is rationalism. Plumptre: "Reason rose in rebellion against a dogma that clashed with men's sense of equity." (*Op. cit.*, p. 167.) And every such utterance of the Hades theologians is a valuable contribution to the cause of the restorationists, who have the same fundamental principle and declare that the teaching of endless punishment "sneers at common sense and spits upon reason." — Farrar, who preaches both the Hades gospel and the apocatastasis gospel, declares: "The voice of reason and conscience, rising in revolt against a doctrine which they found irreconcilable with the love of God, still made itself occasionally heard." "It is certain that no argument hitherto adduced on the other side will ever silence the remonstrance of the outraged reason." (*Op. cit.*, LXIII: 172.)¹⁵

¹⁵ A word on the baffling case of Dr. Farrar. Farrar will have nothing to do with restorationism. "I am unable to adopt the universalist opinion." "For Universalism I have not pleaded." "I cannot preach the certainty of Universalism." "I have never denied the possibility of

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The Hades gospel prepares the way for the apocatastasis gospel. Restorationism is simply the extension of the teaching that God's mercy and justice compel Him to offer the un-

endless misery for those who abide in the determined impenitence of final and willing sin." "The statements which have been so freely circulated in England and in America that I 'denied the existence of hell,' or denounced the doctrine of eternal punishment,' are merely ignorant perversions of what I tried to teach." (*Op. cit.*, pp. XIII, XXIX, 84, 184, 227.) But at the same time he declares for restorationism. "Universalism does indeed derive much support from many passages of Scripture; it—a view more or less analogous to it—was held by Origen, the greatest and noblest, by Gregory of Nyssa, the most fearless, etc." "The Scriptures reveal indeed a future state of retribution, but are—when competently interpreted in the light of modern criticism—absolutely silent as to 'endless torture.'" "We ask men to take nobler and truer views of God than those which run counter to what the Scriptures teach us of His everlasting mercy; of His purpose in punishment being not to torture, but to redeem; of the day when Christ shall have triumphed forever, and God shall be all in all." "What was the teaching of our Blessed Lord,—was it 'turn or burn'? or was it 'Come unto Me and I will give you rest?'" "What a world, we may well exclaim, for the loving and merciful eye of God to contemplate! How frightful a result, in spite of how infinite a sacrifice!" "The soul's transgressions of a few brief hours of struggling, tempted life followed by billions of millenniums in scorching fire. . . . I fling from me with abhorrence such a creed as that." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 61, 84, 113, 119, 121, 155.) *The Theological Quarterly* analyzes the case thus: "It is instructing to note that men like Farrar, e.g., are led by their interpretation of the passages concerned to the very verge of Universalism, only to draw back with a 'God forbid' from the bottomless abyss of dangerous conclusions which they find in that doctrine" (1919, p. 232). Others find that Farrar was a true Universalist and thank him for his universalistic sentiments. *The Winchester Centennial* says, p. 45: "Seventy-four years before Farrar's sermons on 'Eternal Hope,' which have been so widely read and so influential in this country, these men had reached the same broad interpretations which they embody, and were preaching them wherever hearing could be had." *Which Way?* has this to say: "Farrar challenged his critics, who insisted that the same word (*eonian*) must always mean the same thing, to apply that opinion, if they dared to, to the text, 'As in Adam all die, etc.'" "In the popular mind the old evil word 'hell' involves the most dangerous conclusions. Well done, Walter Balfour! Well done, Canon Farrar! Universalists salute you. The New Bible for the New Age admits your noble contention that the word 'hell' has outlived its usefulness if it ever had any, and should now be forever dismissed from human speech." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 88, 101.) Professor E. B. Pusey makes the same diagnosis: "Dr. Farrar's belief is happily better than that of his book. In his book unhappily he contented himself with stating that he was not a Universalist, while he did not observe that all the arguments which he used were Universalist, extending even to what he intended to exclude from his consideration, the restoration of Satan. The book, until it is withdrawn, notwithstanding its author's declaration of his personal belief, must remain, as it is, an inconsistent impassioned pleading for 'Universalism.' It must, as far as it has influence, teach the Universalism which its writer does not believe." (*Op. cit.*, p. V.)—But is Dr. Farrar's case really so baffling? The Hades theologians, if they really believe in their principles and arguments, cannot but harbor in their hearts, consciously or unconsciously, Universalist thoughts, and some cannot keep themselves from expressing them.

believer another chance in Hades, the *status intermedius*; it teaches "a *status intermedius* between bliss and damnation that continues in *eternity*." (Hoenecke, *op. cit.*, IV, p. 226.) "Die Lehre von der Wiederbringung aller Dinge ist der Grundgedanke oder doch die notwendige Konsequenz der schriftwidrigen Behauptung, als habe Christus in der Hoelle Evangelium gepredigt" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1874, p. 83). The Hades theologians will have great difficulty to find a satisfactory answer to the question which a friend asked Dr. Plumptre: "Let me ask, then, will it be possible to extend the period of probation of any man beyond this life without extending it to all? . . . If there is a probation for any, it must extend to all." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 345—346.) It is a miracle of divine grace when a Hades theologian refuses to preach the apocatastasis gospel.

Left to the compelling force of his reasoning and the urging of his flesh, he will promise ultimate salvation to all. And even if he does not, his hearers will, unless the grace of God intervenes, draw the logical Universalist conclusion. He may warn his hearers against restorationism, but Satan will tell them: Your preacher has assured you that divine mercy awaits some who died in unbelief; be of good cheer, the mercy of God is even greater — it extends over all who died in unbelief. — It is the sacred duty of the Christian minister to warn against the dangerous doctrine of the apocatastasis and of the Hades gospel which leads to it, aids and abets it. The language used by W. Floerke in condemning the Hades gospel is not too strong: "Diese Lehre, dass die Gnadenzeit keineswegs zu Ende ist mit diesem Leben, dass noch jenseits des Todes die Heilspredigt schallt und die Umkehr moeglich ist . . . das ist die schlimmste, gottloseste Revolution, die es nur geben kann, und wer seine Kirche noch liebhat, muss dagegen Protest erheben, so laut er kann." (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 1865, p. 27.) The Hades gospel itself creates false hopes and is responsible for the carnal security engendered by the apocatastasis gospel.

The merciful Savior requires His ministers to denounce eternal damnation against the sinner, so that he may throw himself upon the mercy of the Savior. "The Church has pressed upon us, Lent by Lent, that 'it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,' and 'the terrible voice

of most just judgment which shall be pronounced upon' impenitent sinners, 'when it shall be said unto them, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels"'; has taught us week by week to pray, 'From Thy wrath and from everlasting damnation, Good Lord, deliver us'; and, in the sight of death, put into our mouths the piercing cry, 'O holy and most merciful Savior, deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death.'" (E. B. Pusey, *op. cit.*, p. IX.) Luther: "Let us take this sincere warning and kind admonition of our gracious God and dear Father to heart and say: I know, dear God, that Thou art concerned about my salvation; I will, then, turn to Thee in true repentance, never forget about the last trumpet, and daily look for Thy coming to judgment. . . . Our dear Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, grant us His Holy Spirit, that we may, in true faith and in a godly life, look for and hasten to the coming of His day, when we shall be caught up in the resurrection of the dead with the elect and blessed, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (VIII: 1333, 1335.)

Luther and the War Against the Turks

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Modern psychoanalysis tells us that disease is the touchstone of the healthy mind. What is true in the realm of psychology is not less true in the realm of ethics. The most terrible disease in the realm of human relations is war, and so we can say that war is the touchstone of a healthy ethical system. In its attitude toward war the weakness of an ethical system is revealed. In the war situation an ethical system is revealed as basically unrealistic if it proves unwilling to face the actual situation and therefore uses the escape of absolute pacifism. It is revealed as basically immoral if it condones any war to such an extent that it loses sight of sin and injustice and makes of that war a holy war or a crusade.

Because the attitude toward war growing out of an ethical system has a peculiar significance, it is of considerable value

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