Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger. MARKS OF ERROR.

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All error is pernicious. In some cases it is ruinous. It is especially so when it tends to encourage the ungodly to sin with the hope of impunity, or of only slight punishment. It may, therefore, by the Divine blessing, be serviceable to notice some of the marks, or indications. by which error may be detected and avoided.

Among these may be suggested :-1. The assuming of false colors. A man who is advocating the truth has no occasion to call himself by a designation that does not belong to him. He who professes to be one of a party, or body, to which he is, in reality inimical gives strong reason to doubt his candor and fairness. When, therefore, Mr. Jacob Blain tells us, on the title page of his pamphlet-" Death not Life "-that he is a "Baptist Minister," it may be fairly inferred, a hat he is deficient in these important elements. If he ever was a "Baptist Minister," in the ordinary and proper sense of that designation, certainly he is not one now and consequently he ought not to retain the name for the purpose of decoying Baptists. Let them-let all-be on

their guard. 2. Prophesying smooth things. This the ungodly Israelites and Jews wished the prophets to do: and they who did so were thereby shewn to be talse prophets. (1 Kings xxii. 6-14; 23. Isa. xxx 10. Jer. v. 31: xiv. 13, 14.) Mr. B. though evidently reluctant to differ from the Universalists, (p. 21, 22,) sees insurmountable obstacles to the reception of their sentiment that all men will be finally happy; but agrees with them in denying that there is any hell, place or state of future misery; and maintains that there is no conscious existence of any persons, and consequently that there can be no suffering between death and the resurrection, and that the wicked will then be literally burnt up, and so cease to exist. Carnal men, who have no relish for the pure joys of heaven, but ardently desire to enjoy the pleasures of sin, if they cannot find repo e in the belief of Universalism, will be naturally disposed to embrace this system with delight, as being adapted to afford them relief from the disquieting apprehensions of the future dreadful consequences of continued impiety and rejection of Christ. As Mr. B denies that the preaching of terror ever does any good, it is not to be expected that in his public discourses, any more than in his pamphlet, he dwells on the burning up of the impenitent; and this part of the system seems likely to be soon abandoned. Indeed, since the way of error, like that of sin, is downhill, and men do not like the idea of even short suffering, it is not strange that increasing numbers of Ann hilationi ts are said to be now rejecting this sentiment, and so denying the resurrection of the wicked dead. As this doctrine is taught in the sacred Scriptures as plainly a any truth revealed in them, it may be reasonably articipated that such persons will ere long take the next step, and, saying with the unbelievers in Isaiah's time, (xxii. 13.) "Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we shall die," reject the Volume of inspiration altogether.

3. Palpable inconsistencies. Mr. B alleges, (p. 25,) that if sinners are ex- part of the verse shews, that the term devil and his angel. . . And these po ed to endless woe, Christ cannot save any of them, " as he did not suffer endless woe." This fallacious mode o reasoning, ignoring the infinite value of the atonement made by the Son of God, and the efficacy of His precious blood is obviously destructive of his own no countenance to the doctrine of anscheme. If Christ in order to save sinners, must have suffered prec sely that to which they were exposed, then it follows with absolute certainty, that, according to Mr. B.'s view, He can not be things in earth or things in heaven' save any of them, as He was not burnt

up and annihilated.

annihilated, though another might be heaven, and which are on earth." But made like it, that same being would never exist again. But our author adduces numerous words, phrases, and texts, (p. 10-20,) to prove, that the uon and reconciliation are exceedingly wick d are annihilated at the dissolut on different from annihilation. But they of the body and says, (p. 20.) "The final doom of the wicked is death"; and yet he maintains that these same persons will be burnt up, and so annihilated, at the day of judgment. Are not these views grossly inconsistent? These specimens, out of many that might be given, may suffice.

ence to the future state of man than the It should be carefully avoided. New. (2 Cor. iii, 7-14) If he will the fall

One of the passages on which Mr. B.

like his brethren in general, specially rel es, is Malachi iv. 1. "For behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all Scripture said of beasts? that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall born them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." This strongly figurative language, indicating wretchedness by the symbol of being burned up, is eagerly seized by Annihi a ionis s; and it may seem at first sight to give some countenance to their scheme. Bu a careful examination of the pas-age, compared with the remainder of the Chapter, may shew the attentive reader, that it relates not to the day of judgment, of which there is no mention, nor any reference to the resurrection of the dead, but to the atter overthrow and wretchedness of the unbelieving Jewish people, toretold also by Christ, and recorded by Josephus. So the overthrow and deso lation by the Ammon tes is expre-sed by the emblem of "destroying his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath." (Amos ii. 9.) The prophet proceeds to speak of the favorable state of those who would "fear the LORD's name," to whom "the Sun of righteousneswould arise with healing in his wings; and they should go forth and grow up as calves of the stall." This language is by no mean adapted to the state o the pous in heaven after the resurrection; but suits their condition while here in time That Mal. iv. 1, is to be understood figuratively, is evident also from verse 3rd, in which it is said to the pious, " The wicked . . . shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the LORD of hosts." Indeed Mr. B. himself says, (p 75, 76,) "It is yet matter of doubt with me, whether literal fire is ever intended as the ins rument to destroy the wicked. In telling of judgments on the * beast and false prophet alone, fire and burn are used eight times where literal fire is not meant; and in over 100 texts they are thus used." If, then, these terms are used as emblems of wrath and suffering, or "fiery indignation," as Mr. B. says, " surely his scheme of the literal barning up of sinners at the judgmentday, and their annihilation thereby, tounded principally on the text : Malachi, and such expressions as the burning of chaff, tare-, &c , ought, by h s own shewing, to be abandoned.

Acts iii 21. "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of institution of all thing," is cited, (p. 21.) as proof of annihilation. Our Lord said of John the Baprist, "Elias verity cometh . . . and restoreth all things: But how did he " restore all thing ?" Obviously by the fulfilment of all that was written of him, (Mark ix. 12, 13.) In accordance with this, the closing rendered "re titution," derived from the same root, does in reality denote the accomplishment, or fulfilment " of all things which God had stoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Certainly it gives udulation.

Our author adduces Col. i. 19, 20, which speaks of God as " reconciling all things unto himself, whether they and Epli i. 10, "That in the tuiness of times he might gather together in one It is obvious that if any being were all things in thrist, took which are in these texts, with that in Acts, afford a agined, that those who heard these and much more plausible argument in favor of Universalism; for assured y restituturni h no real argument in suppor. of either of these discordant schemes. The Apostle was treating of believers who had gone to lieaven, of such as were then on earth, and those who would subsequently believe. (Col. i. 18-28. Eph. i. 4-14 Jun. avii. 20-

ments to prove 'the unconscious state | whole family in heaven and earth is the Roman Catholic and Greek Churchof the dead,' and to sustain his system, named." This error of applying to the es, and the different denominations of are principally drawn from the Old wicke! those portions of Scripture Protestants, how much soever they have Testament; which undeniably is, in which relate only to the pious, is quite been divided on numerous other points; general, much more obscure with refer- common, and exceedingly dangerous.

join with infidels in asking us, Why he had been tempted to think, (See was not all that concerns mankind made | Eccles. ii. 1-3, and Ps. Ixxiii.) from | be accounted for only on the round of its perfectly plain at the earlier period? external appearances, that "a man hath truth; but the rejection of it by some he may be referred to Job xl. 2. no pre-eminence above a bea-t," Mr B. "Shail he that contendeth with the alleges this as proof, (p. 11,) that it is Almighty instruct Him? He that re- really so. But Solomen presently adds. proveth God, let him answer it" He "Who knoweth" [duly considers the surely can not pretend that the burning difference between] "the spirit of man up of the wicked at the day of judg- that goeth upward, and the spirit of the ment was made known to Adam, or was beast that goeth downward to the revealed for thousands of years after earth.") (Eccles, iii. 18-21) In any more than Babylon," &c. This as it was; and the spirit shall return | conceal the truth. Thus a Mr. Millard, unto God who gave it." (Compare

5. Attempts to erade the obvious meaning of plain texts. It is an unexceptionable rule in exegesis, that plain texts should guide us in the interpretation of such as are obscure. The re versing, therefore, of this course is an

evident indication of error Our Lord Jesus Christ-"the faithful and true Witness"-has unques tionably revealed the future states of men with peculiar plainness. The people to whom He spake were in general either Pharisees or Saducees. Josephus says, "The Saducees take away the belief of the immortal duration of the soul, and of the punishments and rewards in Hades; mainta ning that the souls die with the bodies" He adds, "Their doctrine is received by but a few." He also says, "The Pharisees have the multitude on their side"; and remarks, "They hold that ouls have an immortal vigor in them; and that the wicked are to be detained in an everlasting prison" (Aut. B. xiii. C. v. 6. Wars B. ii. C. viii. 14. B. xviii. C. v. 6.) Mr. Walter Bal our, a shrewd and talented advocate of Universalism, admits that " Christ and his Apostles never expressly contradicted this false notion"-as he calls itcommon to both Jews and Gent l. s. As our Lord knew that all His hear rs who believed in a future state of existence, believed also in the everlasting misery of the wicked, is it not utterly unaccountable that, while He exposed the errors of the tharisees on various points, He never once intimated that this doctrine, which Mr. B. affirms (p 111,) . Is the greatest slander against the Almighty that could be invented," was not strictly true? On the contrary He continually used language adapted to confirm it. On this point the cita-

tion of a few texts may suffice. " Many . . . shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the hildren of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Mat. viii 11, 12.) Fear not them which kill the body, but are not ab'e to kill the soul; but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt x. 28.) Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; Fear him which after He hath killed, hath power to cast into hel." (Luke xii. 4, 5.) (l'ers cutors that could kill the body, could cally east it into the vailey of Hisnom.) "Then shall He say to them on Hileft hand, Depart from me ye cursed. into everla-ting fire, prepared for the shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." (Matth. xxv. 41, 46.) "He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." (Mark iii. 29.) " If thy hand offend thee | cause thee to offend] cut it off: it is bester for thee to en.er halt into life, than having two hands to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched; where their worm dieth no, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark ix. 43-48. Matth. xxiii. 33. Jno. v. 28, 29. viii. 21, 24.)

It surely can not be reasonably imsimilar solemn and alarming declarations uttered by Christ-in compassion warning them to "flee from the wrath to come" - would understand them otherwise than as teaching, that man has a soul, or spirit, which does not die with the body; and that there is a place, or state, in which impendent and oubelieving sinners will uffer "everlasting puni-hment." It is worthy of seri-

till recently some persons have attempted a denial of them. The general re-Because Solomon acknowledges that ception of a sentiment directly opposed to the natural wishes of mankind can naturally flows from aversion to it.

But how does Mr B strive to evade the plain meaning of the passages now quoted, and others of similar import? He alleges, (p. 48.) that "Gehenna" the word rendered "hell" in the text cited above-"ought never to be translated, chap, xii. 7, he says of man at death. way of objecting to the translating of "Then shall the dust return to the earth | words is a measure often employed to opposing the doctrine of Christ's deity, Acts vii. 59) Is this any where in maintained that where we read, (Isa. ix. 6.) "He shall be called . . . The Mighty God," the Hebrew ought not to be translated; but it should be read, "He shall be called . . . Elgibbor. So likewise Abner Kneeland, when professedly making a translation of the Ne v Testament, while he was a Universalist, to evade Chri-t's plain declarution of the everlasting punishment of the finally impenitent, would have the word aionios untranslated, and so gives us Matt. xxv. 46. "These shall go away into aionion punishment : but the righteous into aionion life." The word gehenna occurs in the following texts, Matt. v. 22, 29, 30; x. 28; xviii. 9; xxiii. 15, 33. Mark ix. 43, 45, 47. Luke xii. 5, and James iii. 6. Let the reader try substituting the name of a place, as Babylon, irrespective of punishment, or suffering, in these texts, and see if it will make any consistent sense. As the word paradise used in the New Testament to denote heaven, is taken from the delightful garden of Eden, (see Gen ii. 8, 10 in Greek, and Luke xxiii. 43. 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4. Rev. ii. 7) So the word gehenna, denoting hell, the abode of the miserable, may be naturally derived from words signifying 'the valley of Hinnom', which was a place of filth and wretchedness The emmently learned and judicious Professor Stuart, of Andover, says. " That the word gehenna was common among the Jews is evinced by its frequency in the oldest Rabinical writings. It was employed by them, as all confess, in order to designate hell, the infernal region, the world of woe. In no other sense can it be made out that it was employed in the New Testament" I may add; unquestionably it was used by the Lord Jesus in the sense in which it was under-tood and used by the Jews.

Mr. B. says. (" Bible Meaning," &c. p. 14, 15.) "The 'everlasting punishment' told in Matt. xxv 46, we believe will be endless; but," he adds, " Paul in 2 Thes. i. 9 calls it 'everlasting destruction." The language of Paul, however, who speaks of being "punished," i- evidently to be understood in accordance with that of Christ. The annihilation of the ungodly would not be pun shiment, but exemption from it. Moreover, the Apostle never used such an incongruous phrase as 'everlisting annihilation' -everlasting nothingness! Mr. B. labors also to evade the obvious import of the plain language of Christ, by referring to two Greek Lexicons in which it is suggested, that the primary meaning of the verb kolazo. whence kolasis, in Matthew rendered " punishment," is derived, is to cut off: and a ks, " Who can prove that Christ did not u e this word in its primary sense of catting off? ' Our author ought to know, that it is not incumbent on any one to prove a negative; but he is bound to prove, that Christ did use the worl in thi- sense, and so state that impenitent sinners will "go away into everlusting cutting off!" He should know, also, that, not the etymology, but the common use of a word (usus loquendi) is the proper rule by which its meaning is to be ascerta ned. The verb koluzo is used in the New Testament in the sense of punishing only. (Acts iv. 21; 1 Peter ii. 9.) and the noun kolasis in that of punishment or turment, (Matt. xxv. 46; 1 Juo. iv. 18.)

How does Mr. B. attempt-to evade the evident meaning of the statement of our Lord respecting the rich man and Lazarus? (Luke xvi. 19-31.) He alleges, (p. 49, 61,) that it is a parable. But it unquestionably has a meaning; and that must be consonant with the -plain instructions given by Christ elsewhere. It obviously presents a contrast between two characters; the one living in luxury and worldly pleasure, regardless of God and His needy and affl cted people, and the other a pious sufferer; ous consideration, also, that these senti- but after their deaths the seene is re-24) To these he evidently referred ments have been invariably held, (with versed. The godly man is comforted, 4. The founding of a theory on ob in tike manner when, speaking of Christ, the exception of some few individuals) while the impious is tormented. This scure texts. Obviously Mr. B.'s argue he said, (Eph. ni. 15,) "Of whom the by all professedly Christian bodies, as view is corroborated by the proposal to

send one "from the dead," ver. 30. It exactly accords with the tenor of Scripture. (See Ps. xvii. 9-15. xxxiv. 19, 21. lxxiii. 2-18, 24. Zeph iii. 12. Matth. xxv. 41, 43. Luke vi. 20-25. James v. 1-11. Rev. vii. 14-17.) Mr. B. says, "The rich man denotes the Jewi-h nation. . . the poor man. . . the Gentiles," &c. Here, then, we have the strange anomoly of unbelieving Jews, who are almost frantic if any of their brethren embrace the gospel, praying that the gospel may be sent to their unbelieving brethren! And is there, indeed, "a great gulf fixed" between Christians of other nations and the Jews, which none of the Jews can ever pass over to come to the Christians? (Eph. ii 13-18.)

Surely the putting of such glaringly inconsistent constructions on the plain language of inspiration clearly demonstrates, that the system which demands it must be erroneous.

(Conclusion in our next.)

For the Christian Messenger.

THE WESTVINSTER REVIEW AND THE BAPTISTS.

The October number of the Westminster Review contains two articles of a quasitheological cast, both of some value, though neither of them is entirely trustworthy. The conductors of that Review are tinged with scepticism, which fact their readers should always hear in mind, since the knowledge of it serves to account for many remarks and decisions which would otherwise afford occasion of stumbling.

One of the articles is on "the Pilgrim Fathers.' to whose singular merits the writer accords praise somewhat lavishly, yet without extravagance, for truly they were wonderful men. The other article is entitled " The Baptists." It is destitute of the misrepresentation and calumny which figure so largely in many works that aspire to be called histories; but it is clearly the product of a mind under the influence of prejudice, and hostile to what is considered as evangelical religion. Doubt is orthodoxy in his esteem, and the further a man deviates from the beaten path the more likely he is to be regarded as a firstrate minister.

"The evil of dogmatism," he says, "is clearly seen and felt by most Baptist ministers who have not had a collegiate training, and by some who have not had this advantage. They are always felt when the man is leaving college. By some they are felt all their lives, while others, removed from the in ellectual atmosphere of the lecture-room, soon lose all doubt; and revert to their old creed, se full of contradictions, but yet for many, in some inexplicable way, so full of comfort."

The man's head was in a sad muddle when he wrote that paragraph. It is unfair and misleading. Sceptics, like the persons of whom the apostle Peter wrote, " speak evil of the things that they understand not."

The Review speaks of Dr. Landers, Mr. George Dawson, and Mr. Arthur Mursell as" mea who early broke away from the s:rict orthodox standard," by which, it is supposed, he means that they chose to clothe their religious exercises in a style of their own; not that their thoughts, differed materially from those of their ministerial brethren in general, but that they avoided common and sterotyped phrases, and abominated the language of cant. do not see that they are blamable for this. It is not fair, however, to class those three gentlemen together, Mr. Dawson's name is not found in the authorized list of Baptist Ministers. Mr. Mursell was at one time excessively crotchetty, more remarkable for oddities than for any thing elec. The reviewer says -" Arthur Mursell and George Dawson nave become more prominent as lecturers than as preachers, and both occupy a position which it is as impossible to define as to comprehend." Mr. Mursell, however is pastor of a large Church in the southern suburbs of London.

Dr. Landels is a man of different type. Here is his portraiture : - " Dr. Landels' teaching is very broad. As a preacher he is in many respects not unlike Dr Guthrie, whose countryman he is-that is to say, the amount of gold in his sermons is beaten out very thin indeed. He has read Thomas Carlyle well, and the poets. We should greatly doubt if he had busied himself much with theology, properly so called. His mode of presenting religion to his oudience is rhetorical and practical. In another place he says, "The desire for rest makes Dr. Landels yield to the somewhat hazy views of Mr. Maurice." It is to be hoped that this is incorrect.