

MARKS OF ERROR.

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, that 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. *Propheying smooth things.* This the ungodly Israelites and Jews wished the prophets to do: and they who did so were thereby shewn to be false 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 repose 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 Annihilationists 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 as any truth revealed in them, it may be reasonably anticipated 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-