

**ERRORS AND TERRORS OF
BLIND GUIDES.
THE POPULAR DOCTRINE
OF EVERLASTING PAIN**

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Errors and Terrors of Blind Guides. The Popular Doctrine of Everlasting Pain by N. G. Wilkins

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N. G. WILKINS

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THE POPULAR DOCTRINE OF EVERLASTING PAIN,

R E F U T E D

BY THE

REV. N. G. WILKINS, M. A., LL. M. (Cambridge),
CHAPLAIN TO THE ENGLISH AND AMERICAN RESIDENTS IN HANOVER.

"A time to pluck up that which is planted."
ECCLESIASTES.

THIRD AND ENLARGED EDITION.



HANOVER.

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LONDON.

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1880.

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PREFACE.

In the following work, the design of which is to aid in banishing from the world one of the most ancient, most widely prevalent, and most gloomy of superstitions, it will be found that the infinitely important subject under consideration has been, if briefly, yet thoroughly discussed and dealt with. It has been regarded from various points of view. All the arguments which are usually advanced on the popular side of the question have been fairly stated and fully answered. Moreover, the conclusions arrived at, have been made to rest, not upon the supposed meaning of some few words in a dead language, nor upon the authority of a few, or of many great names, but upon such broad and solid foundations, as can be seen and felt by every observant and reflecting man.

I may add, that, owing to the fact of my being resident in Hanover, I have been unable to refer to many English books, and that I have consequently been obliged, in some instances, to be content with giving the substance of popular

arguments, where I should have preferred to give the exact words of particular authors.

5 Böhmer-Strasse, Hanover.

March 1875.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

Since the publication of the first edition of this work a very considerable and significant change of opinion, with regard to the doctrine in question, has been evinced.

In various religious communities — in the Church of England, in the Wesleyan body, among the Congregationalists, in the Free Church of Scotland, eminent men have come forward openly repudiating the popular dogma, and in some cases, attacking it with much force of reason and rhetoric.

My own experience leads me to believe that the better educated lay members of the Church of England have now generally ceased to hold the dogma; although many of them imagine that it is an essential part of the Christian revelation.

This edition contains an additional chapter — that on the Old Theory of Punishment and the New.

Hanover, 22. March 1880.

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I.

Object of this work. — Quotations illustrating the popular doctrine. — This doctrine, that of many English Churchmen, but not that of the English Church. — Ecclesiastical guides at variance among themselves, and hence cannot all be infallible. — First Christian Teachers attacked under similar circumstances the popular superstition of their time. — The "blind guides" of the first and fifteenth centuries.

I assert, and I undertake to prove to every person who possesses ordinary intelligence and a mind open to conviction, that the commonly taught doctrine, that certain persons will suffer bodily or mental torment for ever, is a doctrine not only opposed to the teaching of God's word and of God's works, but that it is in a high degree mischievous: and I undertake moreover to shew that such a doctrine is incapable of being proved by any revelation however well authenticated.

In order to make it clear that I am not fighting against a shadow, but that this doctrine is commonly taught, I give quotations from the works of authors representing various schools of theology.

"Little child, if you go to hell there will be a devil at your side to strike you. He will go on striking you every minute for ever and ever