

THE  
CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTOR.

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"THAT THE SOUL BE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE, IT IS NOT GOOD."—Prov. xix. 2.  
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"HE FOLLOWETH NOT WITH US."

In this scripture, (Luke ix. 49, Mark ix. 38) we get a glimpse of human nature in one of its weakest and least loveable aspects. It is remarkable too, that it appears with the mild and amiable John for its spokesman. It has happened very often however, that a man's errors and sins have been precisely those, from which, judging from previous knowledge of character we should have deemed him most safe.

The disciples had somewhere met "one casting out devils" in the name of their Master. Who this person was does not appear. Some have conjectured that he was a disciple of John; others more plausibly that he was of the number of the seventy. But upon this point we know nothing. He was evidently one who had heard of the Saviour, believed in his divine mission, and in his name did wonderful works. At this John and his fellow-disciples ought to have rejoiced. But they did not. They were scandalized. They felt aggrieved. They thought themselves entitled to interfere. "Master we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us, and we forbad him because he followeth not us."

This disposition is pretty common in the world. It underlies much of the opposition that is made to the "*casting out of devils*" in the present day. It checks the general progress. It obstructs many a social reform. It interferes oft-times with the extension of the Gospel. Help to a good cause is often refused—active resistance not seldom encountered—for no better reason than that given by John.

I. "He followeth not with us." He is attached to a different religious communion. He's a Kirkman, or a Free Churchman. Or he's a Methodist—a Baptist—an Independent—an Episcopalian. He does not belong to our denomination of professing christians. And therefore, although we durst not deny the worth of his character—durst not deny the excellence of his work—durst not deny that the gospel is preached, that souls are converted, that God is glorified, we take no interest in his labours, or if any a sinister one: Unless indeed, his field of effort be at the Antipodes, or some place almost equally remote. Then no doubt we wish him God speed very heartily and rejoice in his success. But if he come so near that we meet him as