

THE
CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTOR.

MAY, 1859.

“THAT THE SOUL BE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE, IT IS NOT GOOD.”—Prov, xix.

SERMON.

PREACHED AT MAITLAND, MARCH 13TH, 1803, BY THE REVEREND
ALEXANDER DICK.

“*Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.*”—MATH. III. 12.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE VERSE.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ never wants the means of purging his church and people—his, “fan is in his hand.” Sometimes the professing people of God by their sins provoke him to use the fan of temporal judgments. In this manner the dross and tin of ancient Israel were to be purged away. This was the case both before the captivity and at their dispersion by the Romans. Sometimes he called for a famine, sometimes for a pestilence, &c., Amos, iv. 6. By these means much of the chaff is often purged away, and the church appears in her purity. Zech. xiii. 9, “and I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried.”

But the fan is used only to separate and blow away temporizing and nominal professors. It never reaches the genuine servants of Christ in such a manner as to deprive them of their interest in him; but it may and often does reach them so as to make them fall in their common calamity. But even in this case, they are only taken away from the evil to come. They are safe because they are united unto the mediatory person of Christ, and enter into everlasting peace.

But the Lord, as the great purifier of his church and people, also purifies them with the fan of his word. Hence says Christ to the disciples, “ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.” This is the great design of the word of God, viz: to promote the holiness of the Saints, and to make them meet for the happiness of heaven—for without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Hence the