

# THE INSTRUCTOR.

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## TRAVELS.

### ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

They came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him; every one gave him a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold—Job xiii. 11.

The custom alluded to, of relations and friends giving relief to a person in distress, is practised in the East at this day. When a man has suffered a great loss by an accident, by want of skill, or by the roguery of another, he goes to his brothers and sisters, and all his acquaintances, and describes his misfortunes. He then mentions a day when he will give a feast, and invites them all to partake of it. At the time appointed they come, dressed in their best robes, each having money, earrings, finger rings, or other gifts suited to the condition of the person in distress. The individual himself meets them at the gate, gives them a hearty welcome; the music strikes up, and the guests are ushered into the apartments prepared for the feast. When they have finished their repast, and are about to retire, they each approach the object of their commiseration, and present their donations, with best wishes for future prosperity. A rich merchant in North Ceylon, called Siva Sangu Chetty, was suddenly reduced to poverty: but by this plan he was restored to his former prosperity. Two money brokers also, who were sent to these parts by their employer, who lived on the opposite continent, lost one thousand rixdollars, belonging to their master—they therefore called those of their caste, profession, and country, to partake of a feast—at which time the whole of their loss was made up. When a young man puts on the ear rings or turban for the first time, a feast of the same description, and for the same purpose, is given, to enable him to meet the expense of the rings, and to assist him in the future

pursuits of life. When a young woman, also, becomes marriageable, the female relations and acquaintances are called to perform the same service, in order to enable her to purchase jewels, or to furnish a marriage portion. In having recourse to this custom there is nothing that is considered mean—for parents who are respectable and wealthy often do the same thing. Here then we have a simple and interesting illustration of a most praiseworthy usage of the days of ancient Job.

Many bulls have compassed me—strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. Psalm xxii. 12.

The multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people. Psalm lxxviii. 30.

Wicked men, or those who have much bodily strength, who insult and domineer over the weak, are still called bulls in the East. People of docile tempers are called cows or calves. The following expressions are often heard in Ceylon: 'Of what country are you the bull? That bull is always oppressing the calves? Why is this bull always butting the cows? Why has the strong bull of Point Pedro come here?'

What is the cause that the former days were better than these? Eccles. vii. 10.

This question is still asked by the people of the East: and they believe that every succeeding age is worse than the former. The ancients, say they, had rain three-times in the month, and in the year three harvests—the trees also gave abundance of fruit. Where is now the cheapness of provisions? the abundance of fish? the fruitful flocks? the rivers of milk? the plenty of water? Where the pleasures? where the docility of animals? where the righteousness, the truth, and affection? where the riches, the peace, the plenty? where the mighty men? where the chaste and beautiful mothers, with their fifteen or sixteen children? Alas, alas, they are all fled.