

THE
HINDU SEA-VOYAGE MOVEMENT
IN BENGAL

PUBLISHED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE

ON THE

HINDU SEA-VOYAGE QUESTION.

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PREFACE.

THE purpose of the following papers is to stimulate opinion on the subject of Sea-voyages performed by Hindoos. Apart from all questions of principle, the subject is one of growing practical importance. Hindoo young men, in appreciable numbers, proceed to England to receive education in the Universities, to qualify for the Bar, to compete for the Indian Civil Service, for the Medical Service, and in various other ways to equip themselves for the practical work of life. The number is on the increase, of gentlemen, who, if all restrictions were removed, would like to proceed to Europe for purposes of travel, and all the pleasures and profits it brings. There is a growing desire also in some quarters to make excursions to the west for commercial purposes. It cannot be a matter of indifference to the Hindoo community if the gentlemen who come back from Europe after perfecting their education and enlarging their experience are to be received back into society or excluded from it. It cannot be a matter of indifference also whether adventurous gentlemen should have free scope given to them in the matter of travel, or they should have their ambition curbed by social restrictions. The welfare of a country is the welfare of its individuals, and no subject can be of greater national importance than the discussion of the limits which custom may have proscribed to the liberty of movement of the men who compose the nation.

On economic grounds alone the question of sea-voyages is of great practical importance. People may feel themselves driven by sheer necessity to try their fortune in remote countries, to seek new careers, learn the arts of foreign nations, and come back home with added qualification and augmented resources. If these poor, adventurous souls should be denied the opportunities they sought, it is not they alone

that would be sufferers, but the country as well. Social restrictions, however, are likely to prove an effectual barrier to most of them, and the legitimacy of those restrictions therefore deserves serious consideration. The possibility of natives of India marching out in quest of occupation to distant lands may now appear to be too remote, and as a dream. But there are reasons to believe that if the restrictions were repealed or relaxed, opportunities of adventure would often be utilised.

Hindoo society is governed by rules which have their basis in the Hindoo religion. That religion is enshrined in the *shastras*, of which the recognised, authoritative interpreters are the Pundits. The Pundits give their *vyavasthas* or ordinances founded upon the texts. These are accepted by the leaders of the different castes which make up society, and they thus come to regulate usage. On the subject of Sea-voyage, therefore, the first thing necessary was to obtain the opinions of the Pundits. That step has already been taken. It was not of course to be expected that the opinion of every single Pundit in Bengal should be obtained, but many of the leading Pundits have been consulted, and their opinions will be found in the following pages. Mahamahopadhyay Mohesh Chunder Nyayaratna, Madhu Sudan Smritiratna, Navadip, Rajkumar Nyayratna, Mahamahopadhyay Deno Bundhoo Nyayaratna, Mahendra Nath Tarkapanchanun of Bansbaria, Madhusudun Smritiratna of Bhatpara and Kamaksya Nath Tarkabagish are amongst the most honoured names in Bengal, and it will be found that they are all associated with particular opinions on the subject of Sea-voyage. The next step that was taken was to refer the subject to some of the leading members of Hindoo Society, all of the higher castes, and their opinions have also been recorded. Attention may be specially called to the opinion of so distinguished an apostle of Hinduism as Babu Bunkim Chunder Chatterjee. Lastly, a large body of public opinion from various sources, which had been elicited by the discussion, has been set forth in its proper place. It includes the opinions

as well of eminent Englishmen as of newspapers, Hindoo and English. These opinions have a value which must not be overlooked. Pandits interpret the *śāstras*; social leaders judge practicability; but an intelligent public have also a right to be heard, for, unfettered by considerations of authority and custom, they are able to utter the voice of abstract reason. Mere reasonableness is not an excuse for an innovation, but it will hardly be denied that a practice which is manifestly contrary to reason cannot long remain unmodified, and that so long as it does exist it will work mischief. The opinions, therefore, of intelligent and educated men who are even outsiders to our society have an importance that should not be under-rated. The question in its historical and *śāstric* aspect was discussed in a paper by Babu Surosh Chander Dutt, B. A., at a large and representative meeting held on the 19th August 1892, at the residence of the late Maharaja Komul Krishna Bahādoor. The opinions that were expressed by different speakers and the Resolutions that were passed at that meeting, will speak for themselves.

For a full appreciation of the issues involved in the Sea-voyage question it is necessary to bear in mind a few well-known facts which may be thus stated.

1. For a long time past the practice of eating things condemned by Hindoo rules or custom has been pretty common in Hindoo society, but the gentlemen who have indulged in such practices have not been put out of caste. Their number is growing. They include not merely school-boys or wild young men, not merely a few insignificant people who might be regarded as the waifs and strays of society, but also and mainly, elderly, respectable, influential gentlemen, some of whom have been recognised as social leaders. In their own private residences or those of their friends, European or Native, in garden houses, in hotels kept by Europeans or Mahomedans, on steamers, in railway refreshment rooms, numbers of Hindoo gentlemen dine in the European style,

and the orthodox members of society find it convenient to connive at these practices. Demand creates supply. Hence it is we find that restaurants where European dishes are offered, are multiplying. They are set up on largely frequented streets, and near offices and theatres. Year after year, in every town in which the Indian National Congress is held, it is found necessary by the organizers to make special arrangements for those delegates and visitors who are to live in the European style. In a word, the rules as regards orthodox living are every day trampled under foot, and the violations are in no way punished.

2. There was a time when it was considered an un-Hindoo practice to drink pipe-water. Not only is pipe-water drunk to-day by Hindus of unquestioned orthodoxy, but aerated waters, European wines and spirits, and medicines prepared by Europeans, are habitually consumed by large numbers of them. Bread, biscuits and confectionery of European or Mahomedan manufacture are also largely indulged in.

3. Hindu Society has not been able consistently to keep out of its pale all those who have made voyages to Europe. Some of them received recognition in society, at any rate among their friends and relations; and after their death, their sons and other relations have had no difficulty in being accepted as members of society, though no *prayaschitta* had ever been performed by them.

4. Some of those that have made voyages to Europe have, on their return to this country, lived, permanently or for a time, with their relations. Many of their friends and relations have also dined with them on many occasions. Orthodox Society has never ceased to recognise these friends and relations.

5. Either for purposes of business or on pleasure trips, several Hindoos have made voyages to Rangoon, to Madras, to Ceylon. Nobody dreams of excommunicating them.

6. Esteemed Hindoo gentlemen have on some occasions taken part, as host or guest, in entertainments, almost of a public character, conducted in the European style. The names of those who dined on the occasions have sometimes been reported in the newspapers, but orthodox society has never cared to take any notice of their errors.

7. Hindoo Society has exhibited nothing like consistency, observed no definite principle, in dealing with those of its members who have made voyages to Europe. The same men that recognise them on one occasion do not recognise them on another. They dine with them today and decline to dine with them tomorrow. If they are to be excommunicated, those who have dined with them, or otherwise mixed with them in formal social intercourse on ceremonial occasions, should be excommunicated also. But the utmost that the ultra-orthodox members of the community seek to do is to omit to recognise only the travelled men, while they permit themselves to mix freely with men who have been tainted by association with the chief offenders.

What is the inference to be drawn from these facts? Obviously this, that it would not be fair or consistent to exclude from society men who had made only a voyage by sea without transgressing Hindoo rules of living. Surely it cannot be contended that a mere crossing of the sea is a grosser offence than living in a non-Hindu style, or even as gross as that. When open, or, at any rate, well-known violations of Hindoo rules of eating and drinking are connived at and excused, neither reason nor orthodoxy demands the exclusion of men who living as Hindoos had merely travelled to the west. The travelled men themselves, as already observed, have sometimes quietly made their way into society, and after them their sons have got on with even greater smoothness; and neither religion nor reason demands that where the offence is the same, some should be spared and some should be punished. Properly speaking, the offence is not the same,

and the difference is in favour of those who would seek to get the benefit of the present Sea-voyage movement, for they would have to live Hindoo lives. Nor does it appear how the travelled men may be taken to have lost caste, if those who dine and associate them are not taken to lose caste. That a voyage by sea as such, does not militate against Hinduism seems to be tacitly admitted by Hindoo society by the manner in which it has been treating Swami Vivekananda's visit to America. The Swami, so far from being regarded as an apostate by reason of his visit, is being looked up to as a prince of Hindoos and the pride of Hinduism. It is inconceivable, therefore, that the Sea-voyage movement should be opposed on grounds either of religion or logic. If there could be any objection to it, it would be its conservative rather than its revolutionary character. If non-Hindu modes of life are tolerable in the home of Hinduism, they should be tolerable *a fortiori* in travel. But the movement as at present conceived proceeds on the very safe lines of recommending a voyage by sea where it is performed under Hindu conditions of life. The promoters have every hope that they will enlist the sympathy and secure the active support of the entire Hindu community.

THE HINDU SEA-VOYAGE

MOVEMENT IN BENGAL.



OPINIONS OR VYAVASTHAS OF THE PUNDITS OF BENGAL.



Question—I.—Is a person, who makes a sea voyage in a sea going vessel without committing any heinous transgressions, involving degradation, to be considered fallen (*patita*) ?

Question—II.—Is a person, who resides temporarily in England and other foreign countries without committing any heinous transgressions, involving degradation, to be considered fallen (*patita*) ?

Vyavastha I—As sea-voyage, does not come within the category of heinous transgressions, involving degradation, (*patitya*), and heavy penances are not provided for it, and there is nothing even by parity of reasoning to consider it a heinous transgression, a person, who makes a sea-voyage without committing any heinous transgressions, should not be considered fallen (*patita*).

Vyavastha II—As residence in England and other foreign countries does not come within the category of heinous transgressions, involving degradation, (*patitya*) and heavy penances are not provided for it, and there is nothing even by parity of reasoning to consider it a heinous transgression, a person, who resides in England and other foreign countries, without com-

mitting any heinous transgressions should not be considered fallen (*patita*). ^

Mahamohopadhya, Dino Bundhu Nyaratna, Konnagore.
 Kala Chand Tarkaratna, Antpore.
 Bissumbhur Churamony, Gourhati.
 Sriram Nyabhusun, Gourhati.
 Kally Nath Sarbabhoum, Bowbazar, Calcutta.
 Dakhina Churn Smrititirtha, Jhingra, Howrah.
 Soshi Bhusan Vidyaratna, Jabui, Burdwan.
 Jagat Chunder Vidyaratna, Woonsia Kotalipara, Furridpore.
 Kally Kanto Tarkasidhanto, Shampuker.
 Kally Proshad Nyalankar, Chandsi, Backergunge.
 Hurro Mohun Vidyabagish, Kotalipara, Furridpore.
 Bhuggobutty Churn Nyapanchanon, Balur, Hughly.
 Dino Nath Nyapanchanon, Harinavi.
 Gour Mohun Siromoni, Mirzapore.
 Nobin Chunder Churamony.
 Nobin Chunder Tarkabagish, Tala.
 Gokul Kristo Goswami, Simla.
 Gopal Chunder Siromony, Mozilpore.
 Rammoy Bhattacharji, Ramjibunpore, Midnapore.
 Gopal Chunder Sarma, Hogulkuria.
 Rudra Narain Jotibhusan, Nandigram, Cuttuck.
 Jogesh Chunder Bidyaratna.
 Wuma Churn Tarkasidhanto, Badangunge.
 Hurro Nath Sarwasati by his son Nemya Chunder Bhuttacherji, Trivani.
 Sita Nath Churamoni, Polva, Hughly. ^
 Saroda Churn Bidyaratna, Sulkea, Howrah.
 Nobin Chunder Churamony, Kidderpore.
 Kala Chand Devsarman.
 Kally Dass Vidyaratna, Bahir Simla.
 Gopi Nath Siromoni, Kotalipara, Furridpore.
 Kally Dass Nyaratna, Jhamapuker.
 Sudharam Bachaspati.
 Jogendra Smritibhusan, Halsibagan.
 Bani Madhub Tarkalankar, Hatibagan.
 Issur Chunder Vidyaratna, Bikrampore.
 Prosunno Kumar Nyaratna, Kantapuker.
 Ram-Surbessur Vidyaratna, Sobhabazar.
 Girish Chunder Vidyaratna, Jhamapuker.
 Jadu Nath Tarkaratna, Khatora, Howrah.

Sri Nath Siromony, Jahanabad, Hughly.
 Mohim Chunder Siromony, Kotallipara, Furridpore.
 Raj Kristo Tarkaratna, Sufa.
 Sri Nath Tarkaratna, Jara, Midnapore.
 Gungeshur Vidyasagore, Gopinagore, Hughly.
 Ram Tarak Churamony, Calcutta.
 Dhurmo Dass Siromony.
 Bireshur Vidyaratna, Gopinagore, Hughly.
 Wuma Churn Vidyaratna, Naranpore.
 Kally Prosunno Sarman, Ula, Nuddes.
 Khetter Mohun Nyaratna, Aheritolla.
 Rajoni Kanto Vidyaratna, Bagbazar.
 Boykunto Nath Sarma, Raina.
 Ashwini Kumar Sarma.
 Khetter Nath Churamony, Ariadaha.
 Mohendra Nath Tarkapanchanon, Bansbaria.
 Sri Nath Tarkalankar, Bansbaria.
 Durga Churn Deb Sarma.
 Joggeshur Sarma, Dandirhat, Bikrampore.
 Hurro Churn Dêb Sarma, Tulasar.
 Wuma Churn Tarkaratna, Rajpore, 24-Pergunnahs.
 Kanti Churn Nyaratna, Sikdarbagan.
 Jodu Nath Sarbabhoum, Krishnaghur.
 Issan Chunder Tarkaratna, Protappore.
 Thakur Dass Churamony, Mazilpore.
 Rammoy Siromony.
 Kally Kissore Nyaratna, Calcutta.
 Chunder Kissore Tarkatirtha, Bikrampore.
 Keder Nath Sarma.

Madhub Chunder Sarbabhoum. (eldest brother of Mahamohopadhy
 Mohesh Chunder Nyaratna, C. I. E. Sava-Pundit of the Mohisadul-Raj
 Midnadore.)

Mahamohopadhy Deno-Bundhu Nyaratna of Konnagore further
 observes that sea-voyage instead of being considered a great transgres-
 sion is grouped with such light transgressions as going to Sri-Khetter
 (Puri by sea,) for which little or no penance is required. As to residence
 in England and other foreign countries, he adds that no penance is
 provided for it in the Shastras.

The following pandits have signed their names in a separate vyavastha to the effect;—that a Hindu should not be considered fallen although he goes to England and resides there provided he sticks to the tenets of his religion.

Mahamahopadhya Pandit Mohesh Chandra Nayaratna, C. I. E.

Pandit Madhu Sudan Smritiratna, Nuddea,

„ Madhu Sudan Smritiratna, Bhatparah.

„ Kamakhya Nath Tarkabachaspati, Nuddea.

„ Chandra Sikhar Chufamani, Hatibagan, Calcutta.

„ Sri Narain Vedratna, Shampooker.

• Late Tituram Sarbabhoum, Hatibagan, Calcutta.

Pundit Sashi Bhushan Sarma, Sava Pandit of Maharani Sarnomaye,
C. I. E.

„ Durga Charan Tarkatirtha, Sava Pandit of Maharajah Bahadur
Sir Jatindra Mohan Tagore, K. O. S. I.

Late Pandit Khotter Pal Smritiratna.

Pandit Gonesh Sastri, Durgaghat, Benares.

„ Sital Churan Vedantobagis.

„ Ram Nath Tarkaponchanan, Mulajore.

„ Ambika Charan Bidyanidhi, Digshin.

„ Kshettrakali Kabiratna, Bansberia.

„ Rakhaldass Bhattacharji, Bansberia.

„ Ram Gopal Siromoni, Kamarpara.

„ Komola Kanto Bhattacharji, Shahagunge.

„ Nilambar Bhattacharji, Shahagunge.

„ Sarbalochon Sarma Nayachanchu, Chinsura.

„ Troylockho Nath Bidyabhushan.

„ Nemai Charan Tarkaratna.

„ Ram Hari Bidyabhushan.

„ Jogendra Nath Siromoni.

„ Shama Charan Bidyaratna.

„ Jotindra Nath Sarma.

„ Modhusudon Tarkaratna.

„ Surbeshwar Bidyanidhi.

„ Keder Nath Bidyaratna.

„ Mohendra Nath Sarma.

„ Jodu Nath Siromoni.

„ Ram Nath Bidyabhushan.

„ Khetro Mohan Nayaratna.

„ Srinath Siromoni, Pukuria.

Pandit Mritunjoy Vidyaratna, Panaghar, Burdwan.

- „ Ram Hiridaya Tarkabagis.
- „ Koilas Chundra Bāhaspati.
- „ Ram Taran Bhattacharji, Patuliā.
- „ Chunderkanto Bhattacharji, Medinimandal, Bikrampur.
- „ Nundo Kumar Bhattacharji.
- „ Sikher Chunder Bhattacharji.

Question.—If a Hindu go to England and while there observe the tenets of his religion, in such a case should he be considered as committing any transgression at all ?

Answer.—Persons who go over to England or such like *Mlechha* countries without committing such heinous transgressions as the taking of forbidden food, can not be said to have committed any heinous transgression at all ; but for such transgressions as eating while on board a ship and living in a country not inhabited by the four sects of the Aryans, the persons become eligible for their society after expiation. This is the opinion of the learned.

(Sd.) RAJ KUMAR NYARATNA.

It was made the subject of an animated discussion between Pundits at a *Shradha* that was celebrated at Nawabgunge at the house of Babu Rampada Marik, a well-known merchant of the place, and the sense of the assembled Pundits was decidedly in favour of the manifesto which has been issued, viz,—that sea-voyage to foreign countries and residence therein when conducted in accordance with Hindu usages do not involve the loss of caste. Among those who signed the statement are the following Pundits :—

- Abhay Pada Smritiratna, Sibpur.
- Bishwambhur Debsarma, Sookhchar.
- Kherode Chunder Shiromoni, Baraset.

Dinanath Bhatyacharji, Bhadeswar.
 Jadunath Sarma, Chundan-Pakhur.
 Tara Charan Bhattacharji, Chundan-Pakhur.
 Khirode Chandra Bhattacharji Bhatparah.
 Hari Churan Shiromoni, Khurdah.
 Ram-Brahma Chackerburti, Bali.
 Patit Pabana Bhattacharji, Kangachi.
 Rakhalidas Sarmana and Nani Lal Shiromoni.

A great public meeting was held at Bankura, in which all the learned Pundits and leading men of the place were present. After an interesting discussion, it was unanimously declared that sea-voyage to foreign countries and residence therein, conducted in accordance with Hindu usages, do not involve the loss of caste. Among the Pundits who gave their opinion were the following :—

Sambhunath Churamani.
 Anantlal Vidyaratna.
 Madhusudan Vachaspati.
 Chandranarain Vidyaratna.
 Romapati Vidyalkar.
 Jagadis Chandra Vidyalkar.
 Ramdayala Vidyaratna.

There is hardly a higher name in Sanskrit Literature, at least on this side of India, than that of Pundit Madhusudan Smritiratna ; and this is what he said in his Examination before the Public Service Commission :—

“I do not desire to be examined generally in the issues framed by the Commission, but only with regard to the objections felt by orthodox Hindus to a journey to England. A journey across the sea is, according to the *Shastras*, a sin called “*Pokirna*” ; but it is not one of the eight principal sins as laid down therein. It is such a sin as men usually commit. A man committing such a sin would not be outcasted. There is no difference between a journey across the sea to England and a journey to any other place across the sea. A man who goes across the sea to the

temple of Juggurnath would commit just the same sin as a man who went to England. Hindus who go to England or to a "Mlechha" country (*i. e.* a country where the people eat beef, do not follow the Vedas, and do not observe the caste system) commit a certain kind of sin. But the commission of such a sin does not entail loss of caste. Hindus are put out of caste by eating prohibited food, such as wine, food of Mlechhas, beef, &c. Food of Mlechhas is, strictly speaking, food of which a Mlechha is the owner and which has been cooked by him. But Mlechha food is ordinarily spoken of as that cooked by a Mlechha. A Brahmin would lose his caste, if for 24 times in succession he took food of the first class, *i. e.* food belonging to and cooked by a Mlechha, or of the food of the second class, *i. e.* that which had been cooked by a Mlechha 48 times. What has been said about the Brahmin is equally applicable to other classes; but in the case of the Brahmin the penances which would have to be undergone would be greater."

Pundit Jadubeshwar Tarkaratna of Rungpur gave similar evidence. This is what he said :—

"There are various objections to going to England among Hindus. First, the Shasters prohibit the crossing of the Indus *i. e.* the going outside of the boundaries of India. But this sin is not very serious and does not put a Hindu out of caste. Then the eating of certain kinds of food, or food cooked for them by any but certain classes of persons, is prohibited. A journey over the sea to another country is not prohibited in the Shasters. The words used, *Samudra Yatra*, mean a sea-journey or a journey to the sea; and this was formerly understood as meaning a journey to the sea for the purpose of drowning one's self. This was subsequently prohibited, but a journey over the sea to another country is not prohibited, if the food and the cooking restrictions are observed. As regards the food difficulty, it is considered by one school of Pundits that the sin can be expiated, but that the person who commits the sin cannot again associate with his caste-fellows. By the other school of Pundits, it is considered that the sin cannot be forgiven, but that the performance of expiatory ceremonies would allow the offender to mix socially with his caste-fellows. I am rather inclined to agree with the first school of Pundits in their opinion. I think that the text which has thus been differently construed applies to all classes of Hindus."

Here we publish the Vyavastha of the late lamented Pandit
Tarunath Tarkabachaspati with Bengali translation.

समुद्रयार्मगमनदोषमीमांसा ।

ॐ तत्सत् ।

बाणिज्यराजाज्ञादिनिमित्तकसमुद्रनौयाने तत्काले स्वधर्मावुष्ठाने स्नेच्छादिभिर्गुरु-
तरसंसर्गाभावे च द्विजानां प्रायश्चित्ताभावोऽव्यवहार्यताभावश्च । धर्मार्थसमुद्रयानगमने
तु स्वधर्मत्यागे स्नेच्छादिभिर्गुरुतरसंसर्गे च कृतप्रायश्चित्तान्मपि द्विजानामव्यवहार्यता
शूद्राणाम् प्रायश्चित्ताचरणे व्यवहार्यतेति विशेषः ।

तथाहि, हेमाद्रौ कलिवर्ज्यप्रकरणे,—

“विधवायां प्रजोत्पत्तौ देवरस्य नियोजनम्” इत्युपक्रम्य

“द्विजस्याब्धौ तु नौयातुः शोधितस्यापि संग्रहः” इति

आदित्यपुराणवचने शोधितस्यापीत्यनेन कृतप्रायश्चित्तस्यैव संग्रहपदवाच्यव्यवहार्यता-
निषेधेन यत्र विषये समुद्रनौयानं निषिद्धं तत्रैव विषये कृतप्रायश्चित्तस्याप्यसंग्रह इति
प्रतिपादितम् । अत्र शोधितत्वोक्त्यैव प्रायश्चित्तनिमित्तीभूतपापनिश्चय आश्लिष्यते
तन्निश्चयश्च पापावेदकशास्त्रादेव, समुद्रनौगमनमात्रे च कुत्रापि शास्त्रे प्रायश्चित्ताद्यदर्शनात्
न तस्य निषिद्धता, किन्तु तद्गमनकाले स्नेच्छादिस्पृष्टजलान्नसेवन एव, तत्पापापनीदनाय
कृतेऽपि प्रायश्चित्ते न तद्यातुः संग्रह इत्येव कल्पयितुमुचितं शोधितस्यापीति पदस्मार-
स्यात् । अन्यथा समुद्रनौगमनमात्रे संग्रह इतीवाभिदध्यात् । न च तथाभिहितम् । न च

“समुद्रयात्रास्वीकारः कमण्डलुविधारणम् ।

द्विजानामसवर्णासु कन्यासूपयमस्तथा ॥

देवराच्च सुतोत्पत्तिर्मधुपर्कं पशोर्वधः ।

मांसदानं तथा आहुते वानप्रस्थान्मस्तथा ॥

दत्ताक्षतायाः कन्यायाः पुनर्दानं वरस्य च ।

दोषकालं ब्रह्मचर्यं नरमेधाश्वमेधकौ ॥

महाप्रस्थानगमनं गोमेधश्च तथा मखः ।

इमान् धर्मान् कलियुगे वर्ज्यानाहुर्मनीषिणः ॥

इति वृहन्नारदीयवचने समुद्रयात्रास्वीकारस्य कलौ निषिद्ध-
तया निषिद्धातिक्रमे च

“विहितस्याननुष्ठानान्निन्दितस्य च सेवनात् ।

अनिग्रहाच्चेन्द्रियाणां नरः पतनमृच्छति ॥”

इति श्रुतौ क्रमशस्तथाचरणे पातित्यप्रतिपादनात् तद्विषय एव प्रायश्चित्ताचरणसम्भ-
वेन तत्रैव शोधितस्यापीत्यस्यावकाश इति वाच्यम् वृहन्नारदीयवचने उपसंहारे “इमान्
धर्मान्” इत्युक्तेः धर्मरूपसमुद्रयात्रास्वीकारस्यैव कलौ निषेधात् बाणिव्यराजाज्ञादि-
निमित्तकस्य तुस्य निषेधाभावेन तद्विषयकत्वासम्भवात् । आर्य्यते च ब्रह्महत्यादिपापप-
नोदनार्थं समुद्रगमनं पराशरेण,—प्रायश्चित्तप्रकरणे

“शतंयोजनविस्तीर्णं शतयोजनमायतम् ।

रामचन्द्रसमादिष्ट-नलसञ्चय-सञ्चितम् ॥

सेतुं दृष्ट्वा समुद्रस्य ब्रह्महत्यां व्यपोहति ।” इत्यन्तेन

न चात्र समुद्रसेतुदर्शनस्यैव ब्रह्महत्यानाशकत्वं शङ्क्यं, समुद्रयात्रास्वीकारं विना
शतयोजनायतस्य सेतोर्दर्शनासम्भवेन आक्षेपेणैव तद्वननलाभात् । अन्यथा सेतोर्थत्किञ्चि-
दंशमात्रस्य तथात्वे “शतयोजनमायतम्” इति विशेषणसमर्थकं स्यात् तथा च शतयोजन-
विस्तारायतसेतुबन्धदर्शनस्यैव प्रकृतब्रह्महत्यापापनाशकत्वं न तु यत्किञ्चिन्मात्रदर्शनस्य,
पापप्राबल्येन परिश्रमप्राबल्यस्यापेक्षितत्वात् किन्तु एकादश्यादिब्रह्महत्यायाः यत्किञ्चिन्मात्र-
दर्शनस्यातिदिष्टब्रह्महत्यानाशकत्वम् युक्तम् । अतएव

“यो भूय आरभते तस्य फले विशेषः”

इति जैमिनिना सम्यगायासे फलबाहुल्यं निर्णीतं, निर्णीतञ्च ऋग्वेदभाष्ये साधवाचा-
र्य्येण सम्यगायासादिना अनुष्ठिताश्रमेधाद्यपेक्षया तत्तद्यज्ञविद्यावीधकवेदाध्यायिनी मूल-
फलत्वम् । एवञ्च प्रकृतब्रह्महत्यायाः अपनोदनार्थं शतयोजनदीर्घविस्तारसेतुदर्शनं श्रुतौ
विहितम् । तेनैव च समुद्रनौगमनमर्थापत्तिर्लभ्यम् एवं द्वारकत्यादितोषेधाभाक्कसपि
समुद्रयानगमनमर्थापत्तिप्रमाणलभ्यम् । एवञ्च वैदिकसमुद्रयानस्यैव धर्मरूपतया विहितस्य
कलौ निषेधः वृहन्नारदीयवचने कमण्डलुविधारणादिभिः पुण्यापरपर्यायधर्मसाधनत्वेन
धर्मरूपैः समभिव्याहारेण पठितत्वात् धर्मरूपस्यैव समुद्रयानस्य निषिद्धत्वोच्यते ।

“प्रायेण समानरूपाः सहचरा भवन्ति”

इति न्यायात् । एतेन बृहन्नारदस्यैव समुद्रयात्रास्वीकार इति पाठे रघुनन्दनमाधवा-
चार्यादिवहुनिबन्धकारसम्मतं स्थितं निर्णयसिन्धौ समुद्रयात्राः स्वीकार इति पाठकल्पन-
मनाकरमनुचितञ्च तथा सति समुद्रयात्रुर्जनस्य स्वीकाररूपव्यवहारस्य धर्मरूपत्वाभावेन
“इमान् धर्मान्” इत्यभिधानस्यायुक्तत्वापत्तेः । ततश्च धर्मार्थसमुद्रयात्रा-स्वीकारस्यैव
निषिद्धतया बाणिज्यराजाज्ञादिनिमित्तकस्य तस्य कुत्राप्यनिषेधात् तत्समये स्त्रीच्छादि-
गुरुतरसंसर्गे सभ्यावन्दनादित्यागे च तत्पापपनीदनार्थं शोधितस्यापि (कृतप्रायश्चित्तस्य)
न संग्रह इत्यत्रैव आदित्यपुराणवचनतात्पर्यम् । यथा च

“कामतोऽव्यवहार्यस्तु वचनादिह जायते”

इति याज्ञवल्क्येन पातकविशेषे प्रायश्चित्ताचरणेऽपि अव्यवहार्यताभिहिता तत्-
समानन्यायादत्रापि प्रायश्चित्ताचरणेऽपि न व्यवहार्यतेति युक्तमुत्पश्यामः । एवञ्च
समुद्रनौगमनकाले सभ्यादिकतुः स्त्रीच्छादिभिर्गुरुतरं संसर्गमकुर्वन्तश्च प्रायश्चित्तज्ञापक-
शास्त्राभावात् न अव्यवहार्यता नापि प्रायश्चित्ताचरणम् । ततश्च

“उषित्वा यत्र कुत्रापि स्वधर्मं प्रतिपालयन् ।

षट् कर्माणि प्रकुर्वीरन्निति धर्मस्य निश्चयः ॥”

इति स्मृतौ यत्र कुत्रापि वासेऽपि स्वधर्मोत्थाने पापशून्यत्वमुक्तं सुपपन्नम् ।

अतएव कलौ बाणिज्याद्यर्थसमुद्रयाने शिष्टवारीऽपि दृश्यते । तथा हि वत्सराजा-
मात्ययोर्गन्धरायणवाभव्ययोर्युद्धार्थं वत्सराजराजाज्ञया समुद्रयानं रत्नावलीनाटकं वर्णितं,
वर्णितञ्च भाषाचण्डीपुस्तके श्रीमन्ताभिधवाणिजस्तत्पितुश्च इतो वङ्गदेशात् सिंहलगमनम्
न च तद्गमनं तदा केनापि विगीतम् यदि तद्विगीतं स्यात्तदा ते हि शिष्टाः कथं तम्
कुर्युः । एतन्मूलकमेव इदानीमपि अन्यैः शिष्टैर्बाणिज्याद्यर्थं सिंहलादिगमनमनुष्ठीयते ।
अतः समुद्रयानगमनमार्तं निषिद्धमिति तु रिक्तं वचः । ततश्च धर्मार्थसमुद्रयानगमनमेव
कलौ निषिद्धमायातम् । तद्गमनकाले च यदा स्त्रीच्छादिभिर्गुरुतरसंसर्गः सभ्यादित्यागश्च
तदैव प्रायश्चित्ताचरणेऽपि द्विजानामव्यवहार्यता शूद्राणाम् प्रायश्चित्ताचरणे व्यवहार्यत्वैव
द्विजपदस्वारस्यात् अन्यथा लोकास्त्राभौ त्वित्यभिदध्यात् । इत्येव द्विजैः शूद्राणां विशेष
इति दिक्षावसुपदर्शितम् ।

অতঃ যদি কেचित্ ক্রিপকপদ্য সমর্থয়মানাঃ প্রমাণযুক্ত্যভাসাবলম্বীণ প্রত্যবতিষ্ঠেয়
তদা দৃঢ়তরপ্রমাণোপন্যাসেন তেষাম্ভূতীপমর্দনেন স্বপক্ষঃ পশ্চাত্ স্থিৰীকরিতব্যত ইত্যলমতি-
বিস্তরেণ । শুভমস্তু । শিবম্ ।

কলিকাতা রাজকীয় সংস্কৃতবিদ্যামন্দিরাধ্যাপকস্য

শ্রীতারানাথ তর্কবাচস্পতীঃ ।

সবৎ ১৮২৮ ।

সমুদ্রযানগমনদোষমীমাংসা ।

ঔ তৎসং ।

বাণিজ্য রাজাজ্ঞাদি নিমিত্ত সমুদ্রে নৌকা-যানারোহণ করিলে এবং
স্বধর্ম্মানুষ্ঠান করিলে এবং স্নেহাদির সহিত গুরুতর সংসর্গ না করিলে
দ্বিজের (ব্রাহ্মণ ক্ষত্রিয় বৈশ্যের) প্রায়শ্চিত্ত এবং অব্যবহার্য্যতা হইবে না ।
ধর্ম্ম নিমিত্ত সমুদ্রযানে গমন করিলে ও স্বধর্ম্ম ত্যাগ এবং স্নেহাদির
সহিত গুরুতর সংসর্গ করিলে কৃতপ্রায়শ্চিত্ত দ্বিজেরও ব্যবহার্য্যতা হইবে
না, কিন্তু শূদ্রদিগের প্রায়শ্চিত্ত করিলে ব্যবহার্য্যতা হইবে, এই মাত্র বিশেষ ।
প্রমাণ যথা ।—হেমাদ্রিতে কলিবির্জ্য প্রকরণে অভিহিত আছে ।

“ বিধবায়াং প্রজোৎপত্তৌ দেবরত্ন নিয়োজনম্ । ” ইতু্যপক্রম্য

“ দ্বিজস্যাকৌ তু নৌযাতুঃ শোধিতস্যাপি সংগ্রহঃ ॥ ” ইতি

অর্থাৎ কলিযুগে বিধবা রমণীতে সন্তানোৎপাদন বিষয়ে দেবরের
অকর্তব্যতা, এই উপক্রমে সমুদ্র-নৌকারোহি দ্বিজাতিগণ কৃতপ্রায়শ্চিত্ত হই-
লেও অব্যবহার্য্য থাকিবেন ।

আদিত্য পুরাণোক্ত বচনে “ শোধিতস্যাপি ” এই পদটী পর্যালোচনা
করিলে স্পষ্টই বোধ হয় যে, কৃতপ্রায়শ্চিত্ত দ্বিজাতিগণের (ব্রাহ্মণ ক্ষত্রিয়
বৈশ্যের) ব্যবহার্য্যতা নিষেধ দ্বারা যে বিষয়ে সমুদ্রযানারোহণ নিষেধ সেই

বিষয়েই কৃতপ্রায়শ্চিত্ত দ্বিজাতিগণের ব্যবহার্যতা নিষেধ ইহাই প্রতিপাদিত হইয়াছে।

সমুদ্রযানারোহি-দ্বিজাতিগণের প্রায়শ্চিত্ত বিধানদ্বারা প্রায়শ্চিত্তের নিমিত্তীভূত পাপনিশ্চয়ও অনুমিত হইয়াছে, উক্ত পাপনিশ্চয়ও পাপ-জ্ঞাপক শাস্ত্র হইতেই হইয়াছে; সমুদ্রযান গমনে কোনও শাস্ত্রে প্রায়-শ্চিত্তাদি বিধান না থাকায় সমুদ্র যাত্রা নিষিদ্ধ নহে, কিন্তু তদগমন কালে স্নেহাদি স্পৃষ্ট জলান্নসেবনবিষয়েই সমুদ্রযান গমন নিষিদ্ধ, তজ্জন্তু পাপপরিহারার্থ প্রায়শ্চিত্ত করিলেও দ্বিজাতিগণের ব্যবহার্যতা হইবে না, ইহাই “শোধিতস্যাপি” এই পদোপাদান দ্বারা কল্পনা করা উচিত, কারণ এইরূপ কল্পনা না করিলে “শোধিতস্যাপি” এই পদো-পাদান না করিয়া “সমুদ্র নৌগমনমাত্রে সংগ্রহঃ” (সমুদ্রযান গমনকারি-মাত্রেরই অব্যবহার্যতা) এইরূপে নির্দিষ্ট থাকিত। সেইপ্রকার অভি-হিত নাই। এবং “সমুদ্রযাত্রা স্বীকার, কমণ্ডলু ধারণ, দ্বিজাতিগণের অসবর্ণা কন্যা বিবাহ, দেবরদ্বারা সন্তানোৎপাদন, অতিথিসংস্কারের নিমিত্ত পশুহনন, শ্রাদ্ধে মাংস দান, বাণপ্রস্থান, বিবাহিতা অরজস্বা কন্যার পুনর্বিবাহ, দীর্ঘকাল ব্রহ্মচর্য্য, নরমেধ অশ্বমেধ যজ্ঞ, মহা-প্রস্থান গমন এবং গোমেধ যজ্ঞ, মনীষিগণ এই সকল ধর্ম্ম কলিযুগে বর্জ্জনীয় বলিয়া থাকেন” এই বৃহন্নারদীয় বচনে সমুদ্রযাত্রা স্বীকার কলিযুগে নিষিদ্ধ থাকায় নিষেধাতিক্রম করিলেও “বিহিত কার্য্যানুষ্ঠান না করিলে, নিষিদ্ধ কার্য্যানুষ্ঠান করিলে এবং ইন্দ্রিয়সংযম না করিলে, পাতকী হইতে হয়।”

এই স্মৃতি বচনানুসারে ক্রমশঃ সমুদ্রযাত্রাস্বীকারক ব্যক্তিকে পুণ্ডিত হইতে হয়, এবং উক্ত ব্যক্তির প্রায়শ্চিত্তও সম্ভব হয়, অতএব এই স্থলেই “শোধিতস্যাপি” ইহার স্বার্থকতা; (অর্থাৎ সমুদ্রযাত্রাস্বীকারক ব্যক্তি পুণ্ডিত হইয়া প্রায়শ্চিত্ত করিলেও অব্যবহার্য থাকিবে) ইহাও বলিতে পারা যায় না; কারণ বৃহন্নারদীয় বচনের উপসংহারে “এই সকল ধর্ম্ম” এই বলিয়া অভিহিত আছে, স্মৃতরাং ধর্ম্মরূপ সমুদ্রযাত্রাস্বীকারই কলিযুগে নিষিদ্ধ, বাণিজ্য বা রাজাজ্ঞাদি নিমিত্ত সমুদ্রযাত্রাস্বীকার নিষিদ্ধ নহে।

পরিশর, প্রায়শ্চিত্তপ্রকরণে ব্রহ্মহত্যা পাপ পরিহারার্থ সমুদ্রযান বিধান করিয়াছেন, “শত যোজন বিস্তীর্ণ এবং শত যোজন আয়ত রামচন্দ্রের

আদেশানুসারে নল নামক বানর সঞ্চয় দ্বারা সৃষ্ট সমুদ্র সেতু-দর্শন করিলে ব্রহ্মহত্যা পাপ বিনষ্ট হয় । ”

ইহা দ্বারা এরূপও বলিতে পারা যায় না যে, কেবলমাত্র সমুদ্র সেতু দর্শন করিলেই ব্রহ্মহত্যা পাতক বিনষ্ট হয়, কারণ সমুদ্রযাত্রাস্বীকার ভিন্ন শত যোজন আয়ত সেতু দর্শন সম্ভব হয় না, সুতরাং তাৎপর্য্যতঃ সমুদ্রযান গমনও অন্তর্ভুক্ত করিতে হইবে ; উক্ত তাৎপর্য্য কল্পনা না করিয়া সমুদ্র সেতুর কিয়দংশ দর্শন করিলেই ব্রহ্মহত্যা পাতক বিনষ্ট হইবে, ইহা বলিলে “শত যোজন আয়ত” এই বিশেষণটী অনর্থক হইয়া পড়ে। অতএব শত যোজন আয়ত শত যোজন বিস্তীর্ণ সেতু দর্শন করিলেই ব্রহ্মহত্যা পাপ বিনষ্ট হইবে, কিন্তু কিয়দংশ মাত্র দর্শন করিলে হইবে না, কারণ পাপ অধিক হইলে প্রায়শ্চিত্তার্থ পরিশ্রমও অধিক হওয়া আবশ্যিক ।

কিন্তু একাদশ্যাদি ব্রতের ন্যায় যৎকিঞ্চিৎ সেতু দর্শন ও অতিদৃষ্ট (আরোপিত) ব্রহ্মহত্যা পাপ নাশ করিবে। অতএব “যো ভূয় আরভতে তন্ম্য ফলে বিশেষঃ” (অর্থাৎ যে পুনঃ পুনঃ আচরণ করিবে তাহার বিশেষ ফল হইবে) এইরূপ জৈমিনিকর্তৃক সম্যক প্রয়াসে ফলাধিক্য নির্ণীত আছে, এবং ঋগ্বেদ ভাষ্যেও মাধবাচার্য্যকর্তৃক নির্ণীত আছে যে, সম্যক আয়াসাদি দ্বারা অশ্বমেধাদি যজ্ঞানুষ্ঠানাপেক্ষা ততঃ যজ্ঞবিদ্যাবোধক বেদাধ্যায়ীর ফলের ন্যূনতা হইবে। অতএব প্রকৃত ব্রহ্মহত্যা পাপপরিহারার্থ শত যোজন দীর্ঘ ও বিস্তীর্ণ সেতু দর্শনই স্মৃতি শাস্ত্রে বিহিত আছে, এবং সমুদ্রযানারোহণ তাৎপর্য্যতঃ লাভ হয়, এবং সমুদ্রযাত্রাস্বীকার ভিন্ন দ্বারকা প্রভৃতি তীর্থ পর্য্যটন অসম্ভব বলিয়া সমুদ্রযানারোহণ দ্বারকা প্রভৃতি তীর্থ-যাত্রার অন্তর্ভূত হইয়াও তাৎপর্য্যতঃ লাভ হইয়াছে।

অতএব উক্ত প্রকার সমুদ্রযানারোহণ ধর্ম্মরূপে নির্দিষ্ট থাকায় কলি-যুগে নিষিদ্ধ হইয়াছে ; কারণ বৃহন্নারদীয় বচনে ধর্ম্মরূপ কমণ্ডলু ধারণাদির সহিত একযোগে নির্দিষ্ট থাকায় ধর্ম্মরূপ সমুদ্রযাত্রাস্বীকারই নিষিদ্ধ হওয়া উচিত। ধর্ম্মরূপ কমণ্ডলু ধারণাদির সহিত একযোগে নির্দিষ্ট সমুদ্রযাত্রাস্বীকারের ধর্ম্মরূপতার প্রতি শাস্ত্রও আছে। (“প্রায়েণ সমানরূপাঃ সহচরা ভবন্তি ”) (একযোগে নির্দিষ্ট বিধানগুলির প্রয়োগে তুল্যরূপ হয়) উক্ত শাস্ত্রদ্বারা ইহাও প্রতিপাদিত হইয়াছে যে, বৃহন্নারদীয় বচনে “সমুদ্রযাত্রা-

স্বীকারঃ " এই পাঠ রঘুনন্দন ও মাধবাচার্য্য প্রভৃতি বহু নিবন্ধরচয়িতার
অভিमत হওয়ায় নির্ণয়সিদ্ধিতে " সমুদ্রযাতুঃ স্বীকারঃ " এইরূপ পাঠ
কল্পনা করা সর্বতোভাবে অমূলক ও অসুচিত, কারণ এইরূপ পাঠ কল্পনা
করিলে সমুদ্র যানারোহিজনের স্বীকার রূপ ব্যবহার, কোনও রূপ ধর্ম না
হওয়ায় শেযোক্ত "ইমান্ ধর্মান্" (এই সকল ধর্ম) এইরূপ নির্দেশ অযুক্ত
হইয়া পড়ে। অতএব ধর্মার্থ সমুদ্র যাত্রা স্বীকারই নিষিদ্ধ, বাণিজ্য এবং
রাজাজ্ঞাদি নিমিত্ত সমুদ্রযাত্রা কুতাপি নিষিদ্ধ নহে, কিন্তু তৎকালে
শ্রেষ্ঠাদির সহিত গুরুতর সংসর্গ এবং সন্ধ্যাবন্দনাদিত্যাগ করিলে তৎপাপ-
পরিহারার্থ প্রায়শ্চিত্ত করিলেও অব্যবহার্য্যতা থাকিবে,
ইহাই, "বিজম্যা কৌতু নৌযাতুঃ শোধিত স্যাপি সংগ্রহঃ"। এই আদিত্য
পুরাণোক্ত বচনের তাৎপর্য্য।

"অভিলাষানুসারে পাপানুষ্ঠান করিয়া প্রায়শ্চিত্ত করিলেও অব্যবহার্য্য
থাকিবে" এই যাজ্ঞবল্ক্য বচনে পাতকবিশেষে কৃতপ্রায়শ্চিত্তের অব্যব-
হার্য্যতা অভিহিত আছে, তাহার সমান স্থল বলিয়া এ স্থলেও প্রায়শ্চিত্ত
করিলেও অব্যবহার্য্যতা থাকিবে, ইহাই যুক্তিযুক্ত। সমুদ্র নৌকা গমন
কালে সন্ধ্যাবন্দনাদি এবং শ্রেষ্ঠাদির সহিত গুরুতর সংসর্গ না করিলে
(প্রায়শ্চিত্তজ্ঞাপক শাস্ত্র নাই বলিয়া) অব্যবহার্য্যতা হয় না। এবং প্রায়-
শ্চিত্তাচরণ ও হয় না। এ বিষয়ে আরও প্রমাণ দর্শিত হইতেছে,—যথা,
"যে কোনও স্থানে থাকিয়া স্বধর্ম প্রতীপালন করতঃ ষট্‌কর্মানুষ্ঠান
করিবে ইহাই ধর্মের নিশ্চয়" এই স্মৃতি বচনানুসারে যে কোনও স্থানে
থাকিয়া স্বধর্মানুষ্ঠান করিলে পাতকী হইবে না, ইহাই প্রতিপাদিত হইয়াছে।
অতএব কলিযুগে বাণিজ্যাদি নিমিত্ত সমুদ্রযান গমনে শিষ্টাচারও দেখা
যাইতেছে। যথা রত্নাবলী নাটকে ষৎসরাজার অমাত্য যোগেন্দ্ররায়ণ ও
বাল্লবের যুদ্ধে নিমিত্ত রাজাজ্ঞানুসারে সমুদ্রযানারোহণ এবং ভাষা চণ্ডী
পুস্তকে শ্রীমন্ত নামক বণিকের এবং তাহার পিতার এই বঙ্গদেশ হইতে
সিংহলে গমন। তৎকালে উক্ত গমন নিন্দিত ছিল না, যদি ঐ ঐ কার্য্য
নিন্দিত হইত, তাহা হইলে তাঁহারা শিষ্ট হইয়া কখনও ঐরূপ গর্হিত অশিষ্টা-
চরণ করিতেন না। তন্নিমিত্তই বর্তমান সময়েও অত্যাচার শিষ্টগণ বাণি-
জ্যাদির নিমিত্ত সিংহলাদি গমনানুষ্ঠান করিয়া থাকেন। অতএব সমুদ্র

যানারোহণ মাত্রই নিষিদ্ধ এইটী সম্পূর্ণ অলীক বাক্য । অতএব ধর্মের •
নিমিত্ত সমুদ্র যান গমনই কলিযুগে নিষিদ্ধ এবং সেই গমন সময়ে যদি
স্নেছাদির সহিত গুরুতর সংসর্গ হয় ও সন্ধ্যাকিন্দনাদি ত্যাগ করে, তাহা
হইলেই দ্বিজাতিগণের প্রায়শ্চিত্ত করিলেও অব্যবহার্য্যতা হইবে, কিন্তু
শূদ্রাদির ব্যবহার্য্যতাই থাকিবে । কারণ “দ্বিজস্যাকৌ তু নোযাতুঃ” এইরূপ
নির্দিষ্ট আছে । যদি শূদ্রদিগেরও অব্যবহার্য্যতা হইত, তাহা হইলে “লোক-
স্যাকৌ তু” এইরূপই নির্দিষ্ট থাকিত । এই টুকু ব্রাহ্মণ, ক্ষত্রিয়, বৈশ্য
অপেক্ষা শূদ্রদিগের বিশেষ । এই যৎকিঞ্চিৎ মাত্র প্রদর্শিত হইল ।

এবিষয়ে যদি কেহ বিপক্ষ পক্ষ সমর্থন করতঃ প্রমাণ যুক্তি প্রভৃতি সংগ্রহ
করেন, তাহা হইলে দৃঢ়তর প্রমাণ দেখাইয়া তাহাদিগের মত নিরাকরণ
করতঃ স্বপক্ষ স্থির করিব । অধিক বিস্তার করা বার্থ শুভমস্ত । শিবম্ ।

কলিকাতা ।

রাজকীয় সংস্কৃত বিদ্যামন্দিরাধ্যাপকস্য

শ্রীতারানাথ তর্কবাচস্পতেঃ ॥

সংবৎ ১৯২৮ ।

OPINIONS OF MEN OF LIGHT AND LEADING.

*Roy Bankim Chunder Chatterji Bahadoor, C. I. E. has, in the following
letter expressed his views regarding the movement.*

To

MAHARAJ-KUMAR

BINOY KRISHNA DEB BAHADUR.

SIR,

THE questions which you wish me to answer are such as
are best answered by professors of the *Dharma Sastras*. I do
not profess the *Dharma Sastras*, nor am I prepared to under-

•take the office of expounding them. But I have no objection to offer a few observations regarding the present agitation about sea-voyages by Hindus.

In the first place, I do not believe that it is either possible or desirable to promote social reforms by invoking the authority of the *Sastras*. I had to object on the same ground to the late lamented Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar's proposals to suppress polygamy with the aid of the *Sastras*; and I have seen no ground since then to change my opinion. This opinion I hold on two grounds. The first is, that Bengali society is governed not by the *Sastras* but by custom. It is true, that very often custom follows the *Sastras*; but as often again custom conflicts with the *Sastras*. When there is such a conflict custom carries the day.

The second reason for my opinion is that if society were everywhere governed by the *Sastras*, it is doubtful whether the result will be social welfare. You seek to collect the behests of the *Sastras*, regarding sea-voyages, and to induce society to follow them;—are you prepared to induce society to be guided by the *Sastras* on all other matters as well? One of the precepts of the *Dharma Sastras* is, that it is the duty of the *sudras* to perform menial offices for the *Brahmans* and other superior castes;—do the *sudras* of Bengal follow the precept? The *sastras* are not a guide here. Are any of you prepared to enforce this precept? Do you think that any endeavours to enforce it will succeed? Will a Sudra-Judge of the High-Court leave the bench or will the prosperous Sudra Zemindar leave the Zemindar's seat, to respectfully tend the feet of the Brahman manufacturer of eatables? By no means. Bengali society obeys a portion of the *Dharma Sastras* according to its necessities. The rest it has cast off because of its necessities. The same feeling of necessity may induce it cast off what still remains. What good then there is in seeking to ascertain the commands of the *Dharma Sastras*?

My own conviction is that it is impossible to carry out social reformation regarding any particular practice, merely on the strength of the *Sastras* without religious and moral regeneration along the whole line. This I have tried to explain at length in my work on *Krisna-Oharitra*. I have already stated that society here is governed by custom, not by the *Sastras*. Reforms in custom can be achieved only when there is an advance in religion and morals along the whole line. The present agitation is the outcome of the advance that has already taken place. As society advances gradually in religion and morals, the objections against sea-voyages will disappear, or if any opposition should still continue to exist, it would be powerless. But so long as the full measure of advance is not attained, so long it will be impossible to make sea-voyages acceptable to society.

But it has also to be observed that none of us are aware of the exact measure of opposition which exists in Bengali society towards sea-voyages. I see that whoever commands the necessary means and is otherwise favourably circumstanced, does proceed to Europe when willing to do so. I have not come across a single instance in which the journey to Europe was abandoned out of respect to the authority of the *Sastras*. But I am also bound to admit that most of those who return from Europe remain outside the pale of Hindu society. It is a question whether the fault lies with them, or with Hindu society. On their return to this country they voluntarily keep away from Bengali society by adopting European habits and customs. They separate themselves from us by adopting foreign costumes, foreign habits of living, and foreign usages. Those who on their return from Europe did not adopt this course have in many instances been re-admitted into Hindu society. If gentlemen returning from Europe did generally resume habits and usages conformable to Hindu society, it is impossible to say that they would be as a body left outside its precincts.

Lastly, I have to point out that before deciding the question as to whether sea-voyages are in conformity to the *Dharma Sastras* of the Hindus, it is necessary to decide whether it is not in conformity to *Dharma* (religion) itself. Must we reject that which is conformable to religion but opposed to the *Dharma Sastras*, merely because it is opposed to the *Dharma Sastras*? Many will say that alone which is conformable to the Hindu *Dharma Sastras* is religion; and that which is not conformable to them is irreligion. I am not prepared to admit this. None of the older sacred books of Hindus say so. Krishna in the Mahábhárata says,—“*Dharma* is so called because it holds all. Know that for certain to be *Dharma*, which contributes to the general welfare.” (*Karna parvan*. 59, lxix.)

If the Mahábhárata is not guilty of a falsehood, if he whom the Hindus worship as the Divine Incarnation is not guilty of falsehood, then that which is for the general welfare is religious. Now, are sea-voyages for the general welfare or not? If they are, why should they be opposed because they do not happen to be encouraged by the *Smritis*?

I venture to think that Hinduism is not exclusively confined within the *Dharma Sastras*. Hinduism is Catholic in its scope. In the hands of the saintly authors of the *Smritis*, especially in those of the modern Raghunandana and others like him, it has shrunk into narrowness. But the Hindu religion was not the creation of the *Smárta* sages. The Hindu religion is traditional and existed before them. It is nothing unlikely therefore that there should be occasional conflict between the traditional religion and the *Dharma Sastras*. Where we find such a conflict, we ought to prefer to follow the traditional religion. I do not admit the existence of any conflict between religion and the Hindu religion. If such a conflict existed there would be nothing in the Hindu religion to be proud of. If such a conflict existed it would not be entitled to its name of the

Eternal Religion. No such conflict exists. Sea-voyages are conformable to religion because they tend to the general good. Therefore, whatever the *Dharma Sastras* may say, sea-voyages are conformable to the Hindu religion.

27th July, 1892. (Sd.) BANKIM CHUNDER CHATTERJEE.

Col. Ardagh, the private secretary to His Excellency the viceroy, has written the following letter to Baboo Kiran Chunder Roy Zemindar of Narail, on the subject of Sea-Voyages among the Hindus :—

PRIVATE SECRETARY'S OFFICE,

GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

Calcutta, 3rd January, 1892.

DEAR SIR,

Accept my thanks for your good wishes. The pamphlet on the subject of Sea-Voyages among the Hindus appears to me to be deserving of wide publicity. It is obviously desirable that it should be generally known that eminent Pundits have pronounced Sea-Voyages to be consonant with the *Shastras*. I heartily wish success to the movement.

Yours very truly,

J. O. ARDAGH.

Sir Alexander Miller, the Legal Member of the Viceregal Council, has addressed to Maharaj Kumar Benoy Krishna Bahadur :—

SIMLA.
17-4 1892.

MY DEAR MAHARAJ KUMAR,

I have not until now had an opportunity of reading carefully the pamphlet you were kind enough to send me about Sea-voyages by Hindus. You will not expect me to give any opinion upon the interpretation of the Shastras, a question upon which I am quite incompetent to speak; but I am sure that if any means can be found to reconcile the orthodox Hindus to voyages to Europe, and specially to England, it will be of the greatest service to this country.

At the same time I entirely agree with what you said in your opening speech upon that occasion that any reform in the matter, to be useful, "must be based upon the lines of the Hindu method." Whatever may be the case as regards political reform—and even there I am not sanguine of the result, if they come altogether from without—I am clear that social reform must come entirely from within, and must be in accordance with the feeling of the society, or they will be, if not a dead letter, a hindrance to progress. I agree also thoroughly with the lecturer when he says that Hindoo society, like every other living organization, has undergone, and is daily undergoing, change; but it must be recollected that, as in the natural body, so in the body of society, such change must be in itself indefinitely small, and must be assimilated thoroughly before the next takes place. Too great changes, and too rapid changes, only produce disease. I hope the movement in favour of this particular change will grow and prosper. I am sure it would be very useful to English public opinion if they saw more of Hindoo gentlemen. The English idea of a Hindoo is too frequently taken from some Bearer or Ayah, who has accompanied his or her employer to England,



and even the young men who come over to read for the bar or at the Universities, do not mix enough with English gentlemen to affect the feeling of society there. This is partly from their being so few in number, and partly also, no doubt, from the difficulties of language, which induce them to stick a good deal together. I find the same thing, in the opposite direction, when I am one of three or four Europeans in a company of Hindoos.

But unless the movement is supported by men not only of high rank but also of the very highest caste, two things which do not always go together, it will not succeed. A man must feel that when he returns from such a voyage he will be welcomed by his compeers in both respects, and neither left out of the religious ceremonies of his caste, nor looked upon as an inferior by his social equals, otherwise the right men, men of social and racial importance, will not have sufficient inducement to cause them to take the lead ; and without them, in so thoroughly aristocratic a society as the Hindoos, success is impracticable.

My dear Maharaj Kumar,
Yours very Sincerely,
ALEXANDER MILLER.

Baboo Jogendra Chundra Ghosh of Khidderpur has written the following :—

1, NEMAK MENAL ROAD,
Garden Reach, Calcutta.

MY DEAR MAHARAJ KUMAR,

I have received the pamphlet which you have been kind enough to send to me.

Believe me I appreciate your movement very highly. I look upon it in this light :—

We Hindus are subject to (1) a temporal power in those who were once our Kings and are now in your unfortunate position of titular Rajas, and (2) the spiritual power of Brahmans. The temporal power stands disorganized by having been transferred to Musalmans and still more so by the sovereignty of a Protestant power with whom the Archbishop (of canterbury) is subordinate to the King. With us the spiritual power ever since the time of Parasuram have abdicated all temporal authority ; and the temporal power have put themselves, ever since the time of Ramchandra of Oude, under spiritual authority.

Our Brahmans have had in addition to the well-known functions I. *যাজন, অধ্যাপন, প্রত্নগ্ৰহ*, II. *যজন, অধ্যয়ন, দান* the one of *যজ্ঞ*. The last named function was exercised formerly in various ways. But at the present time we have 3 classes of Brahmans 1. Lay Brahmans from the High-Court judge to your Brahman cook. They are no longer priests but their children may any time return to the office, 2. *Gurus, Purohits and Pujaris* of no Sanskrit knowledge and 3. the *Adhyapak* class. It is this last named class who are now the support of Brahmanism. You have collected a mass of opinions from them on the sea-voyage question. But the *Adhyapaks* must be allowed to pronounce upon the subject at a *সভা* on such occasion as *শ্রীক* or other, when they are called together for *বিদায়*.

And then their opinions will pass on to the caste-men of the কন্মকর্তা through their দলপতি, গোষ্ঠীপতি or রাজা whatever the name may be. You hold that important position. You must slowly and quietly secure adhesions. And then when the fitting time comes, the decision should be enforced by taking into samaj some of those who have made sea-voyages.

I think you will not take it amiss that I have writton at this length. You wanted me to write an essay. But the question is one of pure deliberation. Agitation is a foreign instrument and must be suited to our national ways.

With kindest regards

July 8, 1892.

I remain,

Yours Sincerely

JOGENDRA CHANDRA GHOSH.

The following is a copy of a letter from Babu Kally Prosunno Ghosh, an enlightened member of the Pathuraghata Ghose family, to an advocate of the movement.

JORABAGAN STREET,

11th October, 1892.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am in receipt of your very kind letter of yesterday. I really do not know how to thank you sufficiently for the very kind opinion you entertain of me. I know it is due to the partiality of a kind friend rather than anything in me to deserve it. As regards the sea-voyage question, set in by the Sobha-Bazar Raj family, I am fully sensible of the immense advantage our countrymen will reap if they can break through the barriers in its way. But we shall have to proceed with great care and prudence. We must act in harmony with the true spirit of our *Shastras*, so as not to unloose the very bond,

which binds our society. It has been a matter for congratulation that the eminent Pundits of the day have interpreted our *Shastras* in favour of the movement. I am sorry, my present ill-health prevents me from attending the Provincial Conference, proposed to be held on Thursday next, although my naturally reserved disposition generally keeps me back from attending meetings of any sort. But I can assure you that the movement has my hearty sympathy, and though I am unable to attend the meeting in person, I am with you all in spirit.

Trusting this will find you quite hale and hearty, and offering you my most heartfelt greetings of Bijoya in return.

I remain, yours sincerely,
(Sd.) KALLY PRASUNNO GHOSH.

Baboo Surendra Nath Pal Chowdhury an enlightened Zemindar of Ranaghat expressed his opinions in the following letter.

RANAGHAT,
The 25th December, 1891.

MOHARAJ KUMAR,
BENOY KRISNA BAHADUR.

DEAR SIR,

Personally I have full sympathy with the question of Sea-Voyage—taken according to Hindu orthodox usage. I shall try my best to consult Brhamin Pundits of our country, and ask them to give out the true version of our Hindu *shastras* on the question. My conviction is that no right-thinking man will hesitate to further the cause. I shall correspond with you now and then what can I do to help you in the matter.

Yours Sincerely,
SURENDRA NATH PAL CHOWDHURY.

The Hon'ble Maharaja Bahadur Jagadindra Nath Roy of Natore, writes the following to Maharaj-Kumar Binaya Krishna Bahadur of the Shobhabazar Raj family on the subject of Sea-voyage amongst the Hindus.

NO. 35, WELLINGTON STREET,

16-2-94.

MY DEAR KUMAR BAHADUR,

I desire to express my cordial sympathy with the sea-voyage movement. It is impossible for me to pronounce an opinion upon the religious aspect of the question without consulting my Pundits. But regarding it merely from the point of view of the good which it is likely to do I have no hesitation in saying that the movement is calculated to further commerce, stimulate education and contribute largely to the material prosperity and the intellectual advancement of the country.

Yours truly,

(Sd.) JAGADINDRA NATH ROY.

Sir Richard Garth the late Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, writes the following letter to Maharaj-Kumar Benoy Krishna Deb Bahadoor.

DEAR SIR,

Pray accept my best thanks for the Report of the proceedings at the Sobha-Bazar Meeting in favour of the Sea-Voyage movement—I have read it with the greatest interest.

You may be assured, that there are few old Indians who are more zealous in the cause of Indian reform than I am ; and although I cannot do much to help you, and my ideas of what are *useful* and *necessary reforms* are not always in accordance with those of your more advanced liberals, there are some points upon which we are heartily agreed, and as to which I would gladly do all I can to lend you a helping hand.

The object of your present movement is one which has my warmest sympathy. I confess I never could see the reason or good sense of the restriction, which you are anxious to abolish—I have talked to Hindu gentlemen about it over and over again, and I must say, I never found one, who could give me any sensible explanation of it—I do not presume to question the authority of any of your learned Pundits ; and I can quite understand, that there may be some weight in what fell from Babu Janoki Nath Bhattacharjya, that you cannot always interpret the Shasters from rationalistic or utilitarian reasoning. But I think that learned gentleman would hardly like to admit that the Shasters are mere arbitrary rules, founded upon no good principle of reason, or religion, or morality ; and it may be, that there were good reasons for the restriction in former days, which have long since ceased to exist.

There can hardly be a doubt, especially after the experience of the last few years, that young Indian gentlemen do derive very great advantages from visiting England and other foreign countries ; and it seems hard, that they should be deprived of those advantages, unless there is *some cogent reason* in favour of the deprivation.

For myself, I wish with all my heart that I could see your countrymen relieved not only from this, but from many other restrictions connected with caste, which seem to me to have retarded for years past not only their social advancement, but their greatness and prosperity as a nation. I should like to see India what it ought to be ;—a hive of industry ;—a mine of wealth ; and a garden of prosperity.

Providence has been very bountiful to you. You have far greater advantages than we have in England. You have within your own borders everything that you can want, for food clothing and comfort ; and even for wealth and luxury. You have rice and corn stuffs far more than you require ; an abundance of fish, flesh and fruit ; tea, coffee, sugar and tobacco ; silk, wool, and cotton ; mines and minerals—wood and coal ;

and above all, you can command any amount of labour, at a price infinitely lower than we have to pay in England.

What you want, my good friends, is the *spirit* and *enterprise* and *knowledge* to utilize and appropriate all those blessings, and turn them to *your own advantage*. But to do this, you must take a lesson from European nations. Do not allow the foreigners to rob you of your birth rights. Throw off such of your restrictions, as are not founded on religion or reason or morality. Study that invaluable book, Smiles' Self-help. Take a lesson from English enterprise and determination, and you will be a great people.

Very truly yours

RICHARD GARTH.

P. S. I need hardly add, that I hope you will submit my letter to your friends, (and *my friends*, for I am glad to recognize many many as such) at the Sobha-Bazar Meeting. I wish the movement every success and I hope you will make any use you please of this letter.

“We the undersigned having consulted learned Pandits and ascertained the sense of the *Shastras* and the practices of the ancient Hindus are of opinion that a journey to a foreign country by sea and residence therein, if conducted in accordance with Hindu usages, do not involve the loss of caste.”

Moharaja Sir Narendra Krishna Deb Bahadur, K.C.I.M. Shovabazar, Cal.

Raja Rajendra Narain Deb Bahadur, do.

Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter, Kt. Bhowanipur.

Raja Govindo Lall Roy Bahadur, Rongpur.

Kumar Rameswar Mallia, Searsole.

- Baboo Annada Prosanna Mukerji, Zeminder, Goburdanga.
- „ Obhoy Charan Guho, Calcutta.
- „ Gopal Lal Mitter, Vice-Chairman Calcutta Municipality.
- Kumar Manmatho Nath Mitter, Jhamapukur, Calcutta.
- Baboo Hem Chander Banerji, Govt. Pleader High Court, Calcutta.
- „ Kally Prasanna Ghose, Simla, Calcutta.
- „ Mohini Mohun Roy, Pleader High Court, Calcutta.
- „ Ramani Kanta Roy, Zeminder Rajshahi.
- „ Jogendra Narain Acharjya Chowdhury, Zeminder, Mymensing.
- „ Harendra Narain Acharjya Chowdhury, do. do.
- „ Kiran Chunder Roy, Zeminder, Narail.
- „ Girindra Nath Bhose, Thanthania, Calcutta.
- „ Kally Prosanna Dutt, Vakil High Court, Calcutta.
- „ Bany Madhub Bose, Bealon Street, Calcutta.
- „ Kylas Chunder Mookerji Roy Bahadoor, Calcutta.
- „ Bissumbhur Moitry, Combuliatola, Calcutta.
- „ Nilambar Mookerji, Ex-Prime-minister, Kashmir.
- „ Mokhoda Das Mitter, Benaras.
- „ Pryn Nath Palit, Dingabhang, Calcutta.
- „ Norendra Nath Sen, Editor "Indian Mirror."
- „ Girindra Kumar Dutt of the Hatkhola Dutt-family, Calcutta.
- „ Mati Lal Ghose, Editor "Amritabazar Patrika."
- „ Kisory Lal Gosain, Zeminder, Serampur.
- „ Dherendra Nath Dutt, Hatibagan, Calcutta.
- „ Hem Chunder Mukerji, Zeminder Jonai, Chorebagan, Calcutta.
- „ Rai Jotindra Nath Chowdhry, M. A., B. L., Zeminder, Taki.
- „ Roma Nath Dutt of the Hatkhola Dutt-family, Calcutta.
- „ Nobogopal Mitter, Editor "National Paper."
- Dr. Omesh Chunder Mitter.
- „ Surjee Kumar Sarbadhikary.
- Babu Ambica Charan Banerji, Bowbazar Calcutta.
- Raja Poornendu Deb Roy Mohashoy, Zemindar, Bansberia.
- Babu Govinda Gopal Ghose, Jajan, Moorsheedabad.
- Pundit Nemye Charun Siromoni.
- Babu Achinta Nath Chackravarti, Bansberia.
- „ Harihur Ghose, Shibpur.
- „ Benode Behari Ghose, do.
- „ Keshub Lal Hazra, do.
- „ Kalipado Roy, do.
- „ Abhoy Kumar Roy, do.
- „ Panchanan Dass, Gobra, Burdwan.
- „ Ashutosh Ghose, do.

Babu Lalit Mohun Dass, Burdwan.

- „ Shoshi Bhusan Sinha, Juggernathpur, Nuddia.
- „ Gagun Chandra Sinha, Bohoran, Moorsheedabad.
- „ Mohun Lal Roy. do.
- „ Jotirindra Chandra Sinha, Jolcool, Hughli.
- „ Jotindra Nath Ghose, Baishnabtolla, Burdwan.
- „ Kissori Mohun Sinha, Calcutta.
- „ Bhupendra Narayan Ghose, Kulai, Burdwan.
- „ Norendra Nath Ghose, Bansberia.
- „ Gopendra Nath Ghose. do.
- „ Brojendra Kunjar Hazra, Bally.
- „ Troilokhya Nath Sinha, Bhantua.
- „ Chasu Chandra Sinha, Raipur, Beerbhoom.
- „ Ashutosh Ghose do.
- „ Dharmodas Roy, Patuli, Burdwan.
- „ Nobin Chundra Roy, Rajhat, Hughly.
- „ Mothurapati Roy. do.
- „ Gouri Kanto Sinha. do.
- „ Kanti Chandra Roy. do.
- „ Troilokhyo Nath Ghose. do.
- „ Siddeswar Ghose. do.
- „ Jotindra Lall Sinha. do.
- „ Girindra Chandra Das. do.
- „ Surendra Nath Ghose, Bally.
- „ Bhupati Nath Chatterji, B. A. Bansberia.
- „ Rutnesswar Chackravarti do.
- „ Hari Narayan Bhattacharji. do.
- „ Girish Chundra Haldar. do.
- „ Woomesh Chandra Mukerji. do.
- „ Behari Lal Ghosal. do.
- „ Chundra Nath Mukerji. do.
- „ Preo Nath Banerji. do.
- „ Upendra Nath Banerji. do.
- „ Aghore Nath Sinha, Bhatuah.
- „ Golock Chandra Ray Mohashoy, Rajhat.
- „ Gopal Chandra Ray Mohashoy do.
- „ Hari Mohon Gangooly. Bansberia.
- „ Sarat Nath Mukerji, B. A. do.
- „ Gati Nath Mukerji. do.
- „ Monmotha Nath Chatterji. do.
- „ Promotha Nath Mukerji. do.
- „ Jogendra Nath Bhattacharji. do.

Babu Moti Lal Coomar, KhamArpara.

„ Jotindra Nath Nundy, Shahagunge.	
„ Nikunja Behari De.	do.
„ Sarat Chandra Bannerji.	do.
„ Chandi Charun Ghattak.	do.
„ Tarak Nath Palit.	do.
„ Debendra Nath Bhattacharji.	do.
„ Jogobundhu Mukerji.	do.
„ Surendra Chandra Bhattacharji.	do.
„ Hari Nath Pal.	do.
„ Narendra Nath Bhattacharji.	do.
„ Nobin Chandra Banerji.	do.
„ Gora Chand Chackraburty.	do.
„ Rakhal Das Chackrabarty.	do.
„ Ramrokhia Sinha.	do.
„ Sasi Bhusan Dobay.	do.
„ Poresb Nath Sinha.	do.
„ Sarat Chandra Chatterji.	do.
„ Kedar Nath Ghosh,	Hugli.
„ Ashini Kumar Mullik.	do.
„ Peary Mohon Roy.	do.
„ Ashutosh Dutt.	do.
„ Satish Chandra Bannerji.	do.
„ Bama Charan Mullik.	do.
„ Birendra Lall Chowdhury.	do.
„ Gocool Chandra Mullik.	do.
„ Susil Chandra De Neogy.	do.
„ Sontosh Kumar De.	do.
„ Neel Behari Pyne.	do.
„ Surendra Nath Dass.	do.
„ Shib Chandra Mullik.	do.
„ Satish Chandra Gupta.	do.
„ Norendra Nath Ghosh.	do.
„ Roma Nath Mitra.	do.
„ Preranjan Basu	do.
„ Surendra Nath Mozoomdar.	
„ Hari Das Chatterji, Gariffa.	
„ Kali Prasanno Mukerji, Chinsurah.	
„ Shama Charun Bhattacharji, Bansberia.	

Nearly two hundred heads of orthodox families round about Bansberia have signed the statement.

Babu Debendra Kishore Acharjya Chowdhury, Zeminder, Mymensing.

- „ Horihor Mukerji, Govt. Pleader Bankura.
- „ Kuloda Prosad Mukerji. do.
- „ Ganendra Mohan Goswami, South Barrackpur.
- „ Pramatha Nath Mukerji, late Sub-Judge. do.
- „ Jogendro Nath Mukerjee, Munsiff. do.
- „ Madhub Chandra Mukerjee. do.
- „ Nilkanta Mukerjee. do.
- „ Bhaba Nath Banerjee, do.
- „ Jadu Nath Mukerjee do.
- „ Kisor Mohan Gossain, Serampur.
- „ Umesh Chunder Chatterbarti, Munsiff, Serampur.

Rai Kedar Nath Chatterjee Bahadur. do.

Babu Kedar Nath Chatterjee, Senior Govt. Pleader. do.

- „ Abinas Chandra Mitter, Sub-Registrar. do.
- „ Bhagawan Chandra Gossami. do.
- „ Akhoy Kumar Roy Chowdhry. do.
- „ Moti Lal Mukerjee. do.
- „ Mahendra Chandra Lahiri. do.
- „ Akhoy Kumar Bhattacharjee. do.
- „ Nundo Lal Lahiri. do.
- „ Nundo Lal Gossain. do.
- „ Gopal Chandra Gossain. do.
- „ Mohesh Chandra Lahiri. do.
- „ Jivan Krisna Gossain. do.
- „ Nilratan Roy Choudhury. do.
- „ Behari Lal Sanyal. do.
- „ Becharam Gossain. do.
- „ Gopendra Kumar Chatterjee. do.
- „ Debendra Chandra Ghose, B. L., Bhowanipur.
- „ Priyanath Mullick. do.
- „ Ashutosh Biswas, M. A., B. L. do.
- „ Atul Chandra Mukherjee. do.
- „ Kanti Chandra Mukherjee, B. L. do.
- „ Sasi Bhusan Banerjee, B. A. do.
- „ Chandra Bhusan Banerjee B. L. do.
- „ Hemendra Nath Mitra, M. A., B. L. do.
- „ Nogendra Nath Mitra. do.
- „ Ashutosh Mukerjee, M. A., B. L. do.
- „ Surendra Nath Deb, Zemindar. do.
- „ Ambika Charan Mitra, Zemindar. do.
- „ Adya Nath Basu, L. M. S. do.

Kumar Dakhineswar Mallia, Sarsola.

„ Pramathā Nath Mallia. do.

Babu Jnanendra Lal Dutt, Betalbon.

„ Chakan Lal Roy, Zeminder, Chakdighi.

„ Soshi Bhusan Roy. do.

„ Binode Behari Sinha Roy. do.

„ Shama Churan Ghosh. do.

„ Hridya Nath Chackrabutty. do.

„ Ram Krisno Basu. do.

„ Promatha Nath Roy. do.

„ Ram Sudhya Bidyabhusan. do.

„ Rojoni Lal Roy. do.

„ Amrito Lal Sing Roy. do.

„ Bonomali Bhattacharji. do.

„ Jugal Kissore Sing Roy. do.

„ Purnendra Narayan Sinha, Bankipore.

„ Mohini Mohan Chackrabarti, Pubna.

„ Jagendra Nath Mukerjee, Purnea.

Kumar Raj Narain Chaudhury, Babu Hemendra Lal Goṣwamy, Narain Chandra Teyari, Bechoo Lal Patak, Nil Money Arbaju, Kartik Lal Arbaju, Bepin Behari Mitter, Ganga Das Chuchravarti of Basail, Mohesh Chunder Neogi of Debanibus, Umachurn Dutt, Mymensingh. Krishna Lal Mozumdar, Hari Nath Candu, Mathura Nath Roy Chowdhury, Chandra Nath Dey, Surjya Kumar Dass, Bhola Nath Mitter, Hara Kumar Chatterji, Baidya Nath Chakrabarti, Babu Aghore Nath Sannyal of Kulgachi, Hari Das Ghosh of Belur, Abinash Chunder Ganguly, Ram Cumar Ghose, Nabokishore Karmakar, Muktear, Kailash Chunder Karmakar, Muktear, Rahn Kishore De, Brajendra Cumar Mukerji. Babus Madon Mohan De, Behari Lal Biswas, Nobin Chunder Bose of Nasirabad, Gyanendra Nath Guho, Surendra Nath Roy, Satipore, Kashi Nath Chakrabarti, Bansi Nath Pal, Gajendra Narain Dass, Rash Behari Ghose, Bidu Nath Guho, Dwarka Nath Banerji and Aswini Cumar Banerji.

The Vice-Chancellor Hon'ble Justice Gurudass Banerji, referred in his speech at the convocation to the question of Sea-voyages among Hindoos. He said :—

"The movement recently set on foot to reconcile sea-voyages with Hindoo orthodoxy may, if it succeeds, stimulate commercial activity and enterprise, and thereby open out fresh fields of employment for our educated young men."

Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao thus writes on the question of Sea-Voyages :—

"With reference to the letter of 'A Brahmin' on sea-voyages, published in your issue of the 12th instant, my opinion is that according to the fundamental principles of the Vedic Aryan Religion travels to countries beyond seas is no sin. The prescribed duties by the Shaster, he cannot give up wherever he may go. The duties consist of what he should not do. So long as he discharges his duties, it is immaterial where he is. The discharge of these duties creates neither *Pooniam* nor *Papam*. I do not know what are the exact English words to these two Sanskrit words. The aforesaid duties command us to love and worship God by treating His creatures like ourselves, and not to injure ourselves or our neighbours by using prohibited food and drink, and by being selfish at our neighbour's expense. An Aryan is stated in the Grecian Histories to have followed Alexander the Great to countries beyond Bharatavarsha, lived there like an Aryan, and behaved like an Aryan."

Swami Alaram,—the great political *Sanyasi* expressed his opinions in the Nagpur Congress. He said :—

"The loss of caste, consequent on a sea-voyage, is a pure misconception. Sea-voyage is not an *ekadasi* fast that is broken by eating a grain of gram. There is no harm in a person cooking his own food and eating it anywhere. Here you drink water brought to you through pipes, and there too you have to do the same. This in no way would take away your caste. It is stated in Nannuck Chandrodaya that Guru Nannuck went to Mecca for the people, still he did not lose his caste. How think you, then, that you would lose it by undertaking a sea-voyage? Though sixty years old and

a sannyasi (hermit) still, if I be alive, certainly I would go to England, and with this view I have commenced studying English. That well-known Englishman, Mr. Bradlaugh, died while labouring for your good, then don't you feel ashamed in shrinking from visiting England, his birth-land, his home, which his death has hallowed. A series of Congresses held in India would not be so effective in rousing public attention in Britain as a single Congress in London. Let us, therefore, hold our Congress in 1894 in London before the threshold of our Mother Empress Victoria and pray her to redeem those solemn and sacred pledges given by Parliament in 1833 and by Her Majesty herself in 1858."

The late lamented Moharaj-Kumar Nil Krisno Deb Bahadoor uttered the following few lines in the 2nd Calcutta Congress :—

"The cheers that you have accorded to the various speakers are a clear indication of your views as to the necessity of a mission to England. I never could have thought that so many gentlemen would be required to support this resolution, believing that you would at once adopt it when it was proposed. We stand before the British public as complainants, and the Indian Government is the defendant. The British Parliament should be considered as the real jury before whom we are to lay our case. Under the circumstances I think it is only proper and necessary that we should send this our proposed grand mission to England as you have already sent a few individuals to feel the way for them."

The late lamented Pandit Prano Nath Sarwasati expressed his opinions before the Congress Meeting held at Calcutta, 1890.

"Gentlemen, belonging as I do to a race whose limits are the snow-clad Himalayas and the dark waters of the ocean, and claiming as I do some acquaintance with our ancient Brahman literature. I can truly testify that there is nothing in the tenets of our religion which prohibits sea-voyages *as such*; that, I am confident, is the better opinion, and I can also testify, as being in touch with the true orthodox opinion in Upper India, that if it should please the country to endorse the mandate of the Congress, with regard to the meeting in London in 1892, which

I hope will be endorsed at our next Congress meeting in India, and if you will take care to meet to the best of your power the special requirements of orthodox Hindu gentlemen, and I have no doubt the best endeavours will be made—if these wants are met I can assure you there will be no difficulty in getting representative orthodox Hindu gentlemen from Upper India to represent your country."

Baboo Bhupendra Nath Bosu, M.A., B.L., Attorney at-law thus said before the Nagpur Congress :—

"We, in Bengal, have made up our minds, and found our men. Reverend Pandits learned in the Shastras have pronounced that there is no harm in a sea-voyage. Long before the question of sea-voyages had become the burning question of the day, the only passage in the Shastras, which the opponents of reform cited in support of their narrowminded views, was interpreted for other purposes by the late Pundit Taranath Tarka-Bachaspati, justly considered in his time the first grammarian of India, and he said that not sea-voyages, but the expiation of sins by drowning one-self in the sea was what was interdicted in the Kaliyuga. Through a wrong interpretation of one single passage in the Shastras, we Hindus had been burning our widows for centuries, and through the wrong interpretation of another passage, we have shut the door on our progress. Well, gentlemen, the question of sea-voyages so far as Bengal is concerned, has, thanks to the energetic efforts of Maharaj-Kumar Benoy Krishna, been practically settled, and orthodox Hindus, hoary with age, and of indisputable authority, have pronounced themselves in their favour. I have no doubt that the other provinces of India will readily find men to espouse our cause in England. The Central Provinces have pronounced their verdict. My friend, Mr. Mudholkar, continues to be the same respected member of Hindu society as he was before he went to England, at the mandate of the Congress and in obedience to the call of duty."

Mr. Parthasaradhi Naidu from Madras spoke to the same effect. He said :—

"I, however, think it reasonable that the arrangements of the London Congress should be suspended as signified in the resolution in question. I consider the causes that have contributed to the suspension as Providential; for during the two years that will elapse, Pandits and others might thoroughly investigate the question of the feasibility or

otherwise of sea-voyages, so that there might not be any persecution when the band of Congress Delegates returned from England. I have much pleasure in announcing the report that H. H. the Maharajah of Mysore and His Highness the Rajah of Bobbili are contemplating visits to England, and that they have asked the opinion of the Pandits in Southern India and Benares on the question of sea-voyages. It is almost certain that the result of this investigation will be favourable and hope therefore that Delegates from India will be able to go in a body to England and present to the British public their grievances in the most right loyal manner possible."

We extract the following few lines from the *Report of the Sixth National Social conference* held in Allahabad, 1892, in which the Hon'ble Justice Mahadob Gobind Ranade expressed his opinions :—

"In proposing this Resolution, Rao Bahadur Mahadev Govind Ranade observed that this question of sea-voyages had reached a stage, where all that was necessary for its satisfactory settlement was organized action on the part of the leaders of native society. The agitation in Bengal was well kept up throughout the year, and thanks to the efforts of Kumar Vinaya Krishna Bahadur, Mr. Surendra Nath Banerji and others, the old orthodox leaders—both Pandits and laymen—had been fairly won over to the side of progress. It was a sensible advance to notice that large numbers of Pandits and laymen had been convinced that the Shastras did not consider distant sea-voyages and residence in foreign countries as acts involving in themselves any degradation." On his side of the country, Mr. Ranade stated this question has had a longer history, extending over more than 100 years. Under the Peshwa's rule, two Bramhin agents of Shrimant Dada Sahab Peshwa had gone to England 110 years ago, and on their return had been taken back into orthodox society. Fifty years ago an agent of the Satara Rajahs, who had gone to England, had been similarly received back into society. Since then there had been a regular series of accumulated precedents, in which the head Acharyas of different sects had made the same pronouncement time after time after most serious deliberations. On the Madras side also the question was exciting deep interest, and as a proof of it, he would point to the presence among them of a learned Pandit Kustur Rangacharya, who had been expressly deputed by the Government of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore to explain to them the views of the learned men

of that Province. Under these circumstances Rao Bahadur Ranade thought that it was not necessary for him to take up the time of the meeting unnecessarily, and he would at once ask, with the permission of the meeting, Pandit Rangacharya, who did not understand English, to favour them with an exposition of the Shastras on this vexed question in Sanscrit. The Pandits are according to some friends our real leaders, and here we have a living authority, expounding the meaning of the old texts in a way which left nothing to be desired. Neither sea-voyage nor foreign residence involved in themselves any forfeiture of caste or social degradation."

Pandit S. E. Gopalacharlu thus writes in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*,—July, 1892.

"Our artisans and workmen require to know about the improved tools and processes of manufacture used by the foreigners, and unless some of our people go abroad it is not likely that this knowledge will be gained for the country. It is humiliating to think of how many of the articles in daily use in this country by almost all classes are imported from abroad instead of being manufactured here. We do not use a single pin that has not been made in Europe, and even our paper—except the most common qualities—has to be made for us by foreigners. Our cultivators are ignorant of the best and most economical methods of agriculture, and so our land is not as productive as it ought to be. On every account it is necessary that some of our more intellectual men should visit England and other European countries in order to find out what means may be taken for the improvement of the condition of this country. We should remember the example of the Russian Emperor Peter the Great, who went to England and worked in a shipyard, and then went back to teach his own people how to work."

The Hon'ble H. H. Risley thus said in the Shovabazar Meeting held on the 19th August, 1892.

"Although this is a meeting of Hindoos assembled for a peculiarly Hindoo purpose, the Chairman has been good enough to permit me to say a few words in expression of my sympathy with the object of the meeting and in support of its aims. In my opinion the more Hindoos

go to England the better. A variety of causes, which I need not attempt to specify now, have brought about the remarkable result that the higher culture of the upper classes in this country rests upon the basis of English literature and history. To get the best out of a distinctively English culture, it is obviously essential to visit England itself. In all departments of knowledge, literary scientific and political residence in England, even if it be only for two or three years, can hardly fail to be of the greatest benefits to the Hindoos educated on an English basis, and the gain of the individual will in the long run be the gain of the society to which he belongs.

As regards the obstacles which the Hindoo system offers to these visits, I am not competent to speak. But I venture to tell you an experience of my own which throws some light upon the way the question is regarded by the Hindoos of Western India or, at any rate, by some sections of them. Two years ago I happened to be present in Berlin at a meeting of the German Colonial Society held to discuss the development of German East Africa—the country lying between Zanzibar and Lake Tanganyika. Some of you may possibly know that a large number of Germans have very magnificent ideas as to the future of their African Colonies, and expect them to develop into an Empire comparable to India. Any way the meeting I was at was a very large one, and some of the most influential men of the Colonial party were present. It will perhaps surprise you to hear that the main question discussed with the utmost vigour and very strong language on both sides was what attitude ought the German Government to assume towards the Hindoo merchants settled in Bagamoyo, Dar-es-Salaam, Pangani and other places on the coast. According to the German officials these Hindoos were so numerous that the whole trade of the African coast was in their hands—both wholesale and retail—and the fate of the Colony was said to depend upon the mode in which they were treated. One party wished to expel them in a summary Prussian fashion, because their loyalty to German interests could not be depended on, and the other wanted to retain and encourage them. The grounds of the controversy are immaterial for our present purpose. All I want to ask is: If the Hindoo traditions are as uncompromisingly opposed to sea-voyages as the Pandit who just now spoke in Bengali wants to make them out to be, how did these Hindoo merchants come to be in East Africa at all? They could not have got there by land. It would seem then that in the Bombay Presidency the higher castes to whom the merchants who trade with East Africa certainly belong do not take quite the same view of the Hindoo traditions as some of the Pandits of Bengal. And the logic of facts which shows us a large and flourishing settlement

of Hindoo in East Africa, and constant intercourse between that country and Bombay may perhaps in the end be trusted to get the better of the Pandits.

But gentlemen, is it *prima facie* likely that this narrow and pedantic construction of Hindoo tradition can be correct? I do not believe it. So far as my studies of the Hindoo religion and the Hindoo social system have gone, nothing has struck me more than their extraordinary flexibility and adaptiveness. We were told the other day that Hindooism is declining. I do not agree in that view. I have served in several out-of-the-way districts, and had occasion to look carefully into the spread of Hindooism. So far from losing ground one could trace it year by year, or certainly decade by decade, absorbing by a process of impalpable but sure proselytising whole tribes who until recent times has been beyond its pale. One answer at any rate to Mr. Munro's recent lecture might be given in the words of an English poet.

"Look west where whole new thousands are."
In Vishnu-land what avatar,"

Are we now to be told that Hindooism which is so comprehensive in its grasp and adapts itself so readily to the needs of such diverse bodies of men is unable to solve this comparatively minor problem of the social consequences of a sea-voyage? One would have expected other things. Looking at the Hindoo system from one point of view one is tempted to compare it to two august constitutions—the English constitution and the Roman Catholic Church. It resembles the first in its adaptiveness in its power to constantly changing to meet changed conditions of life it resembles the second in its comprehensiveness. It has room in it for the Pantheistic philosopher and for the latest wild convert from some form of fetichism? Can you say more for any system than that? Only I observe—and this evening's proceedings lend point to the observation—the Hindoo religion seems to have no central authority—it has not yet set up a Pope. If it had, the difficulty we have just been discussing could hardly have arisen. You would not have had to appoint a committee to search the scriptures and report their view of sea-voyages. People would have gone to the supreme authority and got their orders. As it is, authorities seem to differ, and one can only hope that the common sense of the community will evolve some reasonable solution."

Babu Sarat Chunder Dass, C. I. E., thus said :—

"Gentlemen,—I have entered this hall without any preparation to speak on the subject before you. After listening to the lecture and the

amusing speeches made by the Pundits, I collected a few points to say one or two words in the way of comment. But as the spell of Mr. Bannerjee's eloquence and the thoughtful speech of the Hon'ble Mr. Risley have banished them altogether from my mind, I am unable to make any remark. I shall, therefore, place before you one or two facts regarding sea-voyage which I consider useful. In doing so, allow me first to explain what I understand of the meaning of the subject in question, "Does a Hindoo lose his caste by crossing the sea?" The question whether he will lose his caste by going to America or Europe, is not before us. I read the little pamphlet on Sea-Voyage which Kumar Benoy Krishna kindly gave me the other day. I noted one or two points in it, and interrogated the Pundit of the Asiatic Society as to what may be the comparative moral merits accruing from different kinds of holy ablutions. He said that the moral merit of bathing in the sea exceeded that of bathing in Ganges. The former being, indeed, the repository of all the sacred waters of the world, and millions long to require that merit by ablution in the Ganga Sagor. From this it is evident that there is no unholiness in the sea. There cannot be any demerit in crossing it. The second point is whether a Hindoo (proper) would consider it defilement to sit together on board the ship with other people. Regarding this I would like to know if you all are aware what is going on in some of the districts in Bengal. For instance, let us see what is the practice followed by the people of Chittagong, Noakholly, and Comillah regarding sea-voyage. About forty years ago, the people of these districts used to come to Calcutta for business, or to travel for pilgrimage to the holy places in the North-West Provinces by the circuitous route across the jungles of Backergunge and Sunderbund. This journey which would generally take 20 or 22 days was regarded with dread by the people on account of the piratical habits of the Natives of Sunderbund. At that period Brahmin youths from these three districts, undergoing the privations of this journey, used frequently to visit Nuddea for learning Sanskrit. But as soon as B. I. Navigation Company opened their steam for service between Calcutta, and Chittagong, the people of the above districts abandoned the circuitous Sunderbund-route. The Brahmans, who had a terror for sea-voyage, asked the advice of the Nuddea Pundits as to what course to follow. Under the circumstances the Pundits freely gave their opinion that the *Biddhanti* would do well to undergo the steamer journey. The number of Pundits of Chittagong, that used to go to Nuddea at that period, was about 120. Last year I met with a large assembly of Brahmans on the occasion of my mother's *shraddha*, when I asked them if they still go to Nuddea, they told me that no one among them is considered a Pundit who has not read under a Nuddea Pundit at least for

12 years. Census can alone tell us with accuracy the number of Brahmans who inhabit these three districts. The opening of railway in Eastern Bengal and also river-steamer service have now-a-days diverted the way of the people of Comillah to go to Goalundo, and it is only lately they have commenced to travel westward by rail in preference to steamer. The President, Sir Narendra Krishna, and Kumar Banoy Krishna possess extensive zemindari in Comillah. It is easy for them to ascertain from their own talukdars and tenants in what number a few years ago, the Comillah people used to come here *via* Chittagong. The Hon'ble Mr. Risley who is the head of the Statistical and Marine Departments, could tell you how many millions of Hindoos make sea-voyages from here and the Eastern Districts of Bengal and Orissa. Orissa is a part of Bengal, and the Uryas are well known for their caste tenacity. I believe no less than two millions of Hindoos are annually carried across the sea by the B. I. S. and Chandbally steamers, from Chittagong, Akyab, Rangoon and Orissa. Has any one of them ever lost his caste?

Leaving Indian shores, we may travel for further evidence on this subject to the Far East. At Shanghai, there are about 100 Hindoos who have gone there from Benares, Allahabad, Cawnpore and the Punjab, and all of whom are employed in the Department of Police, the Military Department, and in commerce. At Hongkong, while living as the guest of a Marwari Hindoo merchant, I met with a merchant of Hyderabad in Sind. He told me that several of his Hindoo friends had shawl firms at Yokohama and New York. Two of his brothers also were at the time [1885] at New York. I asked him and my Marwari host, how was it that they were not cast out of society for having undertaken sea-voyage to such distant places. They told me that they always carried with them a large quantity of dry food such as parched rice, flour, treacle, *luchi*, *gaza* and *laru*. They drew fresh water from a tank like reservoir in the steamer, from which salt has been drawn out by a chemical process. [So they had no necessity of carrying water from the Ganges as the sea-water can be converted into fresh water.] At Bangkok I saw a class of Hindoos called Cling or Kalinga who have temples, gods and goddesses like those of ours. There are twenty Brahman families who perform the coronation ceremony of the King of Siam, prepare the calendar, and serve His Majesty as Court astrologers. The chief of them wears the decoration of the order of White Elephant.

OPINIONS OF PRESS.

The Indian Mirror of 20th August 1892, writes :—

"Ships were not unknown to Indo-Aryans. They went to different parts of the world, and Hindu archaeological remains are to be found still in South America. Commerce flourished among the Indo-Aryans, because they knew how to navigate ships. Neither their religion nor their social customs prevented them from undertaking sea-voyages. The bar to our crossing the sea is only an introduction of later growth, like similar other re-actionary customs, which only have the effect of retarding our national progress. We cannot understand why we should lose caste, if we visit foreign countries without trespassing on our tenets as good Hindus, and without sacrificing our nationality. The lands of other nation are as much God's lands as Hindustan, and a custom or a law which prevents our seeing other lands, and cultivating friendly and business relations with them, cries against very Nature. We ought to see as much of God's universe, and to enlarge our knowledge of men and things as we can before we die. It is certain that we cannot be a great commercial people unless we cross the blue-black seas, and visit distant countries, and open trade relations with them. It is thus, and thus alone, we can advance our material prosperity, and save ourselves from the pangs of starvation. They are our enemies who stand in the way of the fulfilment of such a purpose. The sea-voyage movement among the Hindus is a most important one; and the modern Hindu, who have fallen so much from the position of their ancestors, will add immensely to their honour and happiness, by making the thing a success without doing the least injury to their religion."

The Indian Mirror of 17th August 1892, writes :—

"Next in importance to the question of religion among the Hindus, is the question of their material prosperity. Strangely enough, it is in the name of their religion, and using that religion as their pretext, that the Hindus have brought about their present material decadence. In the name of their religion, they marry early, consummate their marriage early, do many other foolish things; and, most important of all, in the name of their religion, they refuse to cross *kala-pani* and travel to foreign lands by sea. It is not that our home-loving Hindus have ever homely

wits, but want of locomotion and enterprise does not bring their wits into fair exercise. The Bengalis are only now to be seen in distant places like Peshawur or Quetta, but then not in any independent avocations of trade or commerce. The Marwari, we believe, is a good Hindu, but it is exceedingly creditable to him that he is ubiquitous. He is not educated in our sense of the word, but that does not hamper him a bit, and wherever he goes to Cabul, or Balkh, or Hong-kong, everywhere his strong banking and trading instincts bring him a fortune in a short time. Only a day or two ago, a Bhattia gentleman addressed a letter to a vernacular contemporary of Bombay, in which he said that though Hindus, his caste had never been divided on the question of sea-voyages, that Bhattias could be met at Mauritius, Mozambique, or Natal, and that at the moment of writing, he himself was engaged in organising a party of Bhattia and other Hindu tourists to proceed to Chicago to witness the World's Fair. Marwaris and Bhattias among the Hindus make sea-voyages, and are engaged in trade and commerce, and thrive well, but the vast majority of the Hindus are steeped in indigence. And yet we do not see why the Hindus, as a people, should not attain to material prosperity. India is very rich in its raw products, but foreign traders export some of them, manufacture them into things of everyday use, and import them back to India. All the gain is theirs, and all the loss is ours. And yet we go on complaining of our growing poverty, though the remedy lies so entirely in our own hands. Hindus travelled from land to land in ancient times, but they must not do so now. Who says so? Who lays down the law? They say, their religion; we say, mere custom. Babu Bunkim Chunder Chatterji said very truly that the Hindus of to-day, at least of Bengal, are governed more by custom than religion, and they are displeased, because he has sought to bring the naked truth home to them. Maharaj-Kumar Benoy Krishna is the representative of a most respectable orthodox Hindu family of Calcutta, but because he happens to hold liberal and enlightened views, and because he leads the movement of sea-voyages, he is being anathematised. But as to those who attack Babu Bunkim Chunder Chatterji and Maharaj-Kumar Benoy Krishna, are they better Hindus, in point of religion than the gentlemen whom they attack? We must say, at the probable risk of angering many, that the Hindus have fallen away from their religion, and are swayed by customs which came into existence, God knows how. But even these customs are not held paramount except in the case of sea-voyages. So long as one conforms to the outward forms of orthodox custom, so long he enjoys the reputation of being a good Hindu. Let him perform a *Sanskara* or two, and he has discharged all his religious duties, and the remaining eight or nine *Sanskaras* need never be performed. And thus

wedded to custom, and not to true religion, the Hindus go on, poorer and poorer every day, in spirituality, and sunk deeper and deeper in abject poverty. God's wide universe they cannot see, but this little earth, on which they are born, even that they obstinately refuse to know. They will remain at home, moaning and groaning, but they will not use the wings of freedom which they possess like any other people. They complain of foreigners draining away the wealth of the country, but are they not themselves much more to blame for it than those foreigners, who are, after all, making the best of their opportunities ?"

The Indian Union of Allahabad thus writes :—

"In these provinces the question is not of so much importance. The Kayasths, various classes of Brahmans and other caste-men have taken "England-returned" barristers, merchants and other persons without much fuss about it. If the highest caste Brahmin goes to England and *lives carefully to the orthodox Hindoo style*, ready to listen to the dictates of the orthodox Hindoo community—no one will have the slightest objection in taking him back. This we can safely assert. So we have not much anxiety for our men here, who may go to England for the country's cause. But the orthodoxy of Bengal, it seems, is differently constituted. Some of these have raised a hue and cry in defiance of honesty, candor and decency over this question which would not raise them much in the estimation of their sensible fellow-countrymen both in and out of Bengal. There are Hindus, our Bengalee friends must know, beyond the limits of Bengal Proper—who are better Hindus than modern Bengalees, generally speaking, can ever claim to be. They observe the rigid discipline of caste, they do not take food prepared by others, and mostly cook their own food, observing Hindu rites as strictly as they can be observed. What is the average Bengal Hindu of to-day, to these truly orthodox scions of the Aryan race ?

Now censure apart, let us see whether sea-voyages are prohibited to the *real* Hindus. The only texts against *samudrayatrasvikaram* in the *Kaliyug* occur in an *upapurana*, the authority of which has all along been disputed and never practically obeyed. For in the same breath the writer prohibits asceticism ; and the race of *sanyasis*, *sadhus* and *yogis* bespeak of the utter worthlessness and practical impotence of the texts alluded to. To add to this, the best interpreters, annotators and professors, indeed most of them are unanimous in declaring the texts do

not prohibit every kind of *Samudrayatra* or sea-voyage. What better practical proof can there be of the impotence of the texts referred to than pointing out to the thousands of Bengalee Pilgrims who visit the temple of Puri and cross the *Kalapani* on board the British steamers? We need not mention those who go to Madras, Ceylon, Rangoon and other places and thus undertake sea-voyages, nor the transported criminals received back into the bosom of Hindu Society. The list of the Pilgrims to Puri will alone suffice to bring the pseudo-orthodox to their senses. It follows that sea-voyages are not to be condemned merely because they are sea-voyages. There remains the most reasonable objection which a genuine orthodox Hindu may bring forward, viz.—the question of partaking prohibited food. Certainly orthodox Hindus cannot permit this, nor is it desirable that they should do so. Society is bound to keep its prestige and orthodoxy, is bound to obey the *Sastras*. It is therefore desirable that arrangements should be made for orthodox Hindus to proceed to England without partaking of the least objectionable food whatever, and living in the genuine orthodox style. For those who will not or cannot conveniently do this, must be enforced the observance of a penance in accordance with the *Sastras*, as taking of prohibited food is but an *upapatak*, or minor crime. We are fully aware that custom, with us, has preference to the *Shastras*, which it should not have. We are equally certain of the fact that it is impossible to guide or reform the backward members of society, unless you attempt to convince them in a thoroughly moderate, prudent and reasonable way. We do not therefore agree with the dashing reformers of our land, as we cannot agree with the extremely bigotted section who will not listen to the *Shastras* or reason, but have their own way, simply because of their having imbibed a custom which the *Sastras* do not enjoin and which is not observed by all who have the right to call themselves orthodox Hindus.

Bengal, of all our Provinces is the first to come under British rule and it has therefore been forward in many respects. Let it not be backward now in taking practical steps to further the country's good, leaving party feuds and quarrels aside. Customs may and do change, but not the *Shastras*. So it is advisable to base orthodoxy on the *Shastras* and not on customs however old."

The Indian Daily News of 15th November 1892, thus writes :—

“It must be a matter of extreme satisfaction to all lovers of progress to note the steady way in which this movement is gradually gaining ground among the Hindu community. It makes one's heart leap with an ecstasy of joy to find the educated orthodox Hindus come forward with the full sense of the duty which they owe to their motherland in their praise-worthy endeavour to cast off those prejudices and blind bigotry which bar national improvement. They are now beginning to perceive what an amount of mischief to the nation has been perpetrated in the name of their sacred religion when the ban against sea-voyage was first fulminated. It was the darkest day in the annals of the Hindu race: It was associated with those evil days which were connected with national humiliation for the Hindus. It was propagated at the time when the glory of the Hindu nation was on the wane and Mahomedan supremacy, with its concomitant evils, was asserting itself throughout the empire. It is strange, on the other hand, that the practice of sea voyage is always associated with the brightest days of all nations, be they Hindus or of any other nationality. It is connected with the brightest days of the Hindus from the time when their god like Rishis sang the sacred Vedas; when their arts and sciences were the wonders of the world; when their sacred land was visited by pilgrims from other countries; when conquerors like Alexander admired the people; when their manufactures were highly prized at Rome and all the then known world; when poets like Kalidas and Bharuci lived and composed their immortal poems down to the time when the Hindus still retained their spirit of independence. We see a revival of this practice attempted at the dawn of the Mahratta power, when Sivaji the Great captured several ports in the Arabian Gulf. As we have already seen, the practice of seavoyage came into disuse among the Hindus when a death-like torpor succeeded to their former activities in all departments of civilisation. This period is also intellectually blank for them. They have no author to hold before the world as their pride. They left the pursuits of all noble functions, so much so that all sorts of rank superstition and blind prejudices ran rampant amongst them till they began to believe any and every saying composed in Sanskrit as the utterance of the Shastras, however mischievous or irrational the saying might be. It is no wonder then that at this period, when nobody cared to see for himself, and when every doctrine, however tending to national degradation, would pass unchallenged, this mischievous doctrine of interdiction of sea-voyage by Hindus in the name of their religion would be preached and accepted by the very people

who were perhaps the first to navigate the ocean, and derive the benefits therefrom, for a period of three thousand years. The people had lost all spirit of adventure and manliness, and this doctrine, coming with the spirit of the times, ingrained itself so much with the people that they, even now, become incensed if this doctrine be questioned. They will not believe that the Shastras speak against this doctrine, and when the pundits say so they only half believe their statements, though they cannot assign any reason for it. Some even go so far as to question the utility of the movement. We thus see there are three classes of persons who, for some reason or other, oppose the present movement.

First, those who complacently remain contented with the notions they have imbibed from their childhood, however wrong these may be, and would not have their settled notions ruffled for any consideration whatsoever. Second, those that have not so strong a bias against sea-voyage but are ready to go to the root of the question from the shastric point of view. Third, those who question the utility of the movement itself quite apart from its having any religious sanction or not.

The first class of objectors fondly believe that they are the true custodians of the Hindu faith, and as such it is their duty to oppose any and every movement which runs counter to their set notions of Hinduism. When any person supports their view, they eulogise him and call him a true Hindu, but the next moment if the same person unfortunately happens to differ from them on any point, they freely abuse him and cry him down as anything but Hindu. They do not even hesitate to arrogate to themselves greater knowledge of the Shastras and of Hindu religion generally than even the pundits, the true expositors of Hindu Shastras, can claim to. Their opinion is formed beforehand. Their self-sufficiency does not permit them even to enter into the merits of the question. They are blessed indeed in their vanity and ignorance. Let them remain so, if they so like.

The second class of objectors are quite conscious of the benefits derivable from sea-voyage, but they ask if it be consonant with the spirit of the Shastras to break through the existing custom. When they get the opinion of the pundits—the views of the Shastras about sea-voyage—they hail the opinion with joy as the harbinger of a better day for India. But still they entertain some doubts as to the practicability of the movement. They say we admit there is no objection to sea-voyage and residence in foreign countries *per se*, but is it practicable for a Hindu to live like a Hindu under the circumstances? This objection the promoters of the movement have thoroughly met. They give, in support of their conten-

tion that it is quite practicable to live like a Hindu on board a ship or during residence in a foreign country, the opinions and evidence of men thoroughly qualified by their experience to be entitled to our confidence.

Sir William Comor Potheram and other eminent Anglo-Indian Officials, Mr. Costling, President, Poona Industrial Conference, himself a vegetarian, the *Indian Daily News*, have all expressed their opinion that it is quite possible for a person to be a vegetarian in England. There is no lack of necessaries for the Hindus there.

Babus Surendra Nath Banerjee and Trailokya Nath Mukerjee, who had been to England, have pronounced their opinion in unmistakable language in favour of this contention. Messrs. Thomas Cook and Son, than whom a greater authority on the conditions of travel cannot be found, have pronounced their deliberate opinion in these terms : "Indeed so far as the practicability of the movement is concerned, we from our experience in these matters are in a position to say that no objection on that score need be raised, either as regards the arrangement on board the steamers or the residence in England." The promoters of the movement have not stopped with citing opinions only ; they have given the experience of men who actually lived in the Hindu style in Europe and elsewhere. The ascetic Puran Puri and the Guzerati whom Babu Rabindra Nath Tagore met in England, as well as the Marwari merchants whom Babu Sarat Chundra Das, C. I. M., met in China, and the Marwari merchants of New York mentioned by him, the Hindu merchants of German East Africa mentioned by the Hon'ble Risley at the Sobha Bazar meeting, bear living testimony to the practicability of the movement. The thousands of Hindu Government officers with their families, merchants, members of the learned professions, and labourers and Hindu sepoys, who almost every week go to Chittagong, Burma, Africa, the remote colonies of England, France, &c., and elsewhere, prove conclusively that it is quite possible for a person to live the Hindu life anywhere on the face of the earth if he cares to do so. Indeed the evidence on this point is overwhelming.

The third class of objectors hold various opinions regarding the effects of sea-voyage on Hindu society. Some are afraid the Hindus will lose their nationality ; others doubt whether the mischief to be done will not outweigh the benefits derivable from the revival of this custom ; and a third class hold that as sea-voyage can foster materialism only, the Hindus will lose their spirituality.

These objections against sea-voyage are not specific but had been and are being constantly urged against education and modern civilisation.

The bond of nationality is strengthened rather than weakened amongst the people of a conquered country sunk in almost hopeless state of misery and dependence on other people if the members of that community visit other free and independent countries. They see what life the people live there, what blessings they enjoy. They learn what nationality is. They appreciate and value the living national feeling. They fully see by contrast the measure of degradation to which their country has sunk. They feel with poignancy their miserable situation; they shed many a silent bitter tear for the misfortunes of their country; they imbibe the noble feeling to raise their fallen country from the depths of her misery to a state equal to those which they see and admire. We see this noble patriotism working in the breasts of men like Messrs. Surendra Nath Bannerjee, Monmohun Ghose, W. C. Bonnerjee, Romesh Chandra Dutt, and a host of others. Indeed the political movements of the country tending to national welfare are in the hands of men who visited England. They are the moving spirit of the National Congress.

English education and the new environments brought forth by modern civilisation have created in the minds of the people of this country new ideas which they admire but feel it difficult to assimilate to make these their own. Sea-voyage and residence in Western countries help the sojourners there to assimilate these ideas. This is what led *Indian Nation* to write :—"The immemorial prohibition of the Hindu to cross Kalapani (the black waters of the sea) has sealed his doom, has effected his political extinction, and left him an intellectual *roue*." The Hon'ble Mr. Risley said the same thing when he remarked "to get the best out of a distinctively English culture, it is obviously essential to visit England itself." We thus see sea-voyage is a necessary supplement to the education which the people are now receiving.

There can possibly be no difference of opinion about the beneficial effects of sea-voyage on the material condition of the country. The economic condition of the country requires that people should visit England and other western countries, without the least possible delay, to learn manufacturing industries and establish agencies there for the purpose of commerce. No manufactory here can now be established without the active co-operation of the Europeans. They, therefore, get the most of any venture that may be started by the native capitalists of the country. The economic condition of the country is below normal, and the tendency is still downwards. Most of the people live almost on famine rations, and the least failure of crops carries away thousands from the land of the living. It is not luxuries but bare necessities of life

for which sea-voyage is absolutely required. There is no other way to improve the economic condition of the country.

The Objections of those who are afraid of the increase of materialism and loss of spirituality of the people rests on some misunderstanding. They seem to think that if the people take to better their material condition according to the ideas imbibed from Western countries, they will neglect their devotion to religion, and as the result place great value for the welfare of this life than for hereafter. Their central idea seems to be that a man cannot be religious living in the bosom of his family; that the Grihasthasram, is not the proper sphere for religion. The greatest religious teachers of India have preached against this doctrine; and we need observe nothing further than this that what the doctrinaires express they do not feel, and preach a doctrine; they cannot and do not observe in their practice or make the people follow their advice. We may, however, remark here, by way of parenthesis, that the very text quoted by the opponents of the movement in favour of their contention that sea-voyage has been interdicted in Kali Yuga speaks against this doctrine, and about the interpretation of that portion there is no difference of opinion. The alarmists, however, may take heart in that so long as the Hindus retain the memory of their ideal, and see some, even amongst them, trying to go up to that ideal, no fear need be entertained as to their deviating from the path of religion they are now following. The *charbaks* of India could not divert them from their true path, nor can the *charbaks* of the West make them do so.

There are many other objections of a similar nature, more imaginary than real, which are urged against sea-voyage and indeed against modern civilisation. These objections amount to this, that the savage life, as the illustrious Rousseau once tried to represent, is the arcadian purity and peace and civilised life, the odious, abominable contrast. Some people will always pine for them, but the world will move in spite of their bewailings and lamentations.

It has been attempted to give in a succinct way the general drift and character of the present sea-voyage movement. It is an attempt to revive a beneficial custom which prevailed in the good old days of India, and which ceased to be in vogue with the downfall of the Hindus. The methods adopted by the promoters of the movement is Hindu in its spirit and in its working. It is only an outward manifestation of the deep under-current of thoughts and ideas that are rousing a noble and once puissant nation after a long period of almost death-like torpor to her former activities in all the various departments of human thoughts

and actions. The people are beginning to be painfully awakened to their present deplorable situation. They perceive the force of the remarks of the late Mr. Robert Knight in the columns of the *Statesman* so far back as 1885, that "while Chinese emigrants are crossing and recrossing the great Pacific by myriads—while English boys are starting upon their bicycles for a tour round the globe and Japan, filling the universities of Europe with Japanese students—with what reason can the orthodox Hindu persuade himself that social restrictions against travels which were natural enough in ages when there were no means of travelling, and when voyaging was consequently as rare as it is now universal, will continue to be respected or to maintain their force when they have altogether ceased to be natural, and are merely a burden which no man is able to bear. . . . Native youth must travel or see themselves distanced by the youth of far less civilised people than the Bengalees." Let us, therefore, hope, that the energetic capable spirits among the people of this country will unite their self-interest with patriotism, and in enriching themselves restore to the people those manly virtues and useful knowledge of manufacturing industries for want of which they are gradually sinking in the depths of misery and, as the result, not infrequently die prematurely."

The Manchester Guardian writes as follows, on the question :—

"Although educated high caste Hindus are to be seen in this country usually engaged in qualifying themselves for professional life by study at British Universities and other schools of law and science, it is generally understood that in leaving the land of their birth they break the law of their caste and religion, and can only be reinstated, if at all, by a costly process sometimes involving the performance of ceremonies at once painful and grotesque. This is to-day in India the general interpretation of the Vedic rules binding upon the 'twice-born, Brahmins. But in the *Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review* the Pundit S. E. Gopalacharlu insists that the rule is based upon a misapprehension of the texts of the Hindu scriptures. The point is one of some importance, for the excommunication of the travelled Brahmin is not only a source of individual suffering to him and to his relatives but naturally acts as a deterrent to those who under happier circumstances would gladly see the Western world and learn what it has to give that would be beneficial to the people of Hindustan. Pundit Gopalacharlu is fully convicted of the value of European education to

those of his fellow countrymen who are in a position to avail themselves of it. "On every account," he says, "it is necessary that some of our more intellectual men should visit England and other European countries, in order to find out what means may be taken for the improvement of this country." He quotes from Manu the saying that "all sorts of arts and sciences may be received from all men and that spiritual knowledge may be obtained even from the lowest class of men." These sentiments are indisputable enough, but they may serve to show that the rules of caste were not intended to be so stringent in their sanctions as is sometimes thought. Moreover the modern prohibition of sea-travel to the higher castes, has naturally given the lower castes; not trammelled by such prejudices a greater chance of the education which secures to them a professional career. Now there is no special reason in the Vedic religion for the continuance of laws and customs after they have ceased to be useful. On the contrary the Vedic rules have been modified by Manu, and his code has again been modified by Parasara and other more modern sages. What the Pandit Gopalacharlu suggests is the holding of a "legal assembly" of learned Brahmins to examine what the Hindu Scriptures have to say upon the subject."

The Hindu Patriot says :—

"Through the exertions of Maharaj-Kumar Benoy Krishna Deb Bahadur, the opinions of a number of distinguished leaders of the Hindu community have been obtained regarding the liability of Hindus to lose caste by sea-voyage. These gentlemen have consulted learned *Pundits* well versed in the *Shastras* and are of opinion that if one lives in Hindu style, there is no reason why there should be loss of caste. This is a great moral and economic gain for those that have given this opinion, including among their names such as those of Raja Rajendranarain Deb Bahadur, Babu Abhoy Churn Guha and other recognised leaders. The question should now be one of ways and means, and measures have to be adopted for strict observance of caste rules both during the voyage and the stay outside India. The battle is thus half won, for it is well begun. Let our reformers always remember this. If they wish to succeed, they must carry society with them, and they will have no difficulty in persuading society to go with them, if only they be reasonable. Reform by force means severance and failure."

The Marhatta of Puna writes :—

“The Pundits of Bengal have given two *Vyavasthas* anent the sea-voyage question which will be found elsewhere with their names. They declare that neither sea-voyage nor a temporary residence in England involve any degradation from caste in themselves. They are not included in the category of heinous transgressions and no heavy penances are prescribed for them. As to slight penances they are quite harmless as they are simply purificatory ceremonies, involving no idea of sinfulness or repentance. We are also glad that the movers in this agitation have made a reservation that the traveller must not depart from caste rules about food and drinking. The question of sea-voyage has become of immense practical importance to all Hindus in view of the probability that the next year's Congress might be held in London, and it is perhaps well that it forms a part of the coming Bengal Provincial Conference, although we doubt its appropriateness in a political gathering.”

The Bengalee writes :—

“We know that many of the most conspicuous leaders of the orthodox community hold similar views. We have reasons to believe that the feeling on the subject is strong and that it is growing. In the words of one of the most eminent members of the orthodox community, whose weight in the community is undoubted—can it be that the Hindoo Shasters have closed to us the fairest portions of the habitable globe—can it be that they thus fetter our energies, prevent the expansion of all trade and of all industry on the part of Hindoos? We know that in the past the Shasters were misinterpreted, and that it was a misunderstanding of the Shasters which consigned to the funeral pyre millions of unfortunate widows in times that are now happily past and gone. *Sati* finds no justification in the authoritative writings of the Hindoos; and now again the discovery is made by Pundits, whose opinion ought to carry great weight, that sea-voyages are not interdicted, and that residence in foreign countries is not forbidden, provided Hindoo customs and usages are observed. It is a beneficent movement which has been started, fraught with unspeakable good to the people. It is altogether a hopeful movement, for it indicates that amid the deep instincts of conservatism which underlie the fabric of Hindoo beliefs, there is a recognition of the spirit of the times, a sense of adaptability, and a desire to suit the system to the altered circumstances, consistently of course with Hindu

usages. It is in this way that this ancient fabric has been conserved ; it is in this way alone that it can be preserved against those new-born forces by which it is now beset. Confronted with Buddhism and its militant and aggressive teachings, it executed a dexterous change of front, assimilated some of its doctrines, absorbed into its own body some of its great principles, gave Budha a place in the Hindoo pantheon, though under a Hindoo name, and by a process of assimilation and absorption, and passive opposition where necessary, the Hindoo system maintained its own, and crushed Buddhism out of existence. Deep far-seeing insight and enormous power of adaptability have contributed to maintain this ancient fabric ; and these qualities, we hope, are not now wanting. The truth cannot indeed be too frequently repeated that a society without the means of change is without the means of its own conservation. The present movement has filled us with the hope that the spirit of cautious advance is not wanting, and so long as this spirit is present, we may hope to see those changes, cautious, gradual and tentative, which are necessary even for the maintenance of this ancient system."

The Madras Times writes as follows :—

"The *Indian Social Reformer* devotes a major portion of its notes, this week to the discussion of sea-voyages by Hindus, and considers that it is a mere chimera to suppose that sea-voyages could ever become popular or benefit the nation at large if the prohibition imposed by custom on inter-dining and accepting food from other caste men is not abolished. As a matter of fact, even in India our contemporary observes people of one caste eat the food cooked by people of another caste. "What is the bread given at the Cosmopolitan Club except that manufactured at the bakery ? The bread in England must be placed in the same category. In both cases low caste men bake it. If you are allowed to accept it at Madras, why not you be permitted to do so while in London ?" The only answer that occurs to us is that Madras is in the holy land of Bharathavarsha, and London is not "holy" ground. Whatever sins are committed in such holy ground are forgiven to the committers thereof. It appears to us that it is good Shastras although it may be bad logic. A good old Hindu proverb says that the person who drinks pure cow's milk under the palmyra tree will be taken by passers by to be drinking of the toddy of the tree. So in London even Brahman-baked bread cannot pass muster, while in Madras bread baked by a "low caste" man can not but be pure, and the orthodoxy of such bread is guaranteed by the very fact that a high caste man is sure

to partake of it. Summing up the position of Hindus in regard to the sea-voyage movement, the *Indian Nation* indites the following judgment as pronounced by orthodoxy:—"Take then thy bond, make thou thy trip to England; but in the making it, if thou dost eat one slice of Christian bread, thou lovest thy caste and by the laws of the Hindu religion thou art excommunicated." In England even a slice of Hindu-bread is apt to turn Christian; and the professors of orthodoxy in India think it the safer course to adhere to that opinion."

The London Daily News writes on the question :—

"The Hindus of Bengal are opening their eyes very wide on the world of their own time. Trial by Jury, and competitive examination, are by no means the only institutions to the advantages of which they are awake. They show a laudable anxiety to reform their own customs and practices, as well as to borrow those of the ruling race. They have had deep searchings of heart about infant marriage, and the treatment of widows, and they are now trying to remove the hindrances to sea-travel, which are imposed by the law, or by the traditions, of their faith. They are forbidden to cross the great water on penalty of losing caste. At any rate, such is a general opinion of the vulgar, and it has, of course, led to the gravest inconvenience in almost every branch of practical affairs. They must pass the Ocean to reach this country for their education. They can hardly trade on a large scale without the help of the sea. The ever-increasing burden of the prohibition has at length led some of them to enquire on what authority it is based. To their infinite relief, they are now in a fair way to discover that it has no foundation at all in the precepts of the faith. A large and influential meeting of the Hindus was lately held at the Sobha Bazar in Calcutta, at which this gratifying circumstance was announced. It was attended by some of the most influential members of the Hindu community, and by a few Europeans of position. There were Pundits in plenty, Babus with M. A. after their names, and Babus with B. L. The speeches, were in English, and moreover in English that we speak at home. The testimony of those who attended is that the "Sea-voyage Movement" has now reached a definite stage in its progress and in its history. With few exceptions the Babus and the Pundits are for putting to sea with all convenient speed. They feel that to keep ashore is to lose all chance of competition for the prizes of life with "that wonderful race of adventurers," our noble selves. They are also of opinion that Hinduism is quite equal to all the emergencies

of progress, and that its essential principle of elasticity, and its power of adapting itself to circumstances, will finally triumph over all the difficulties imposed by ignorance and superstition. In fact, the Hindu faith, wisely interpreted, is as ready to come to terms on the question of going down to the sea as another faith is on the question of not going down to another place.

The main purpose of the meeting was to hear a paper on the subject by that learned Hindu Babu Suresh Chunder Dutt, B. A., Head Master of the Calcutta Institution. In point of form it was just such a paper as might have been read at a literary institution in this country. It began with a saying of Dr. Johnson, but in less than twenty lines, it had come up with the Shastras, which belong almost to unrecorded time. The lecturer's position was that these sacred writings of the community not only contain no prohibition of sea-travel, but show that the early Hindu was an enterprising, and, almost by consequence, a travelled man. He went all over the world—to Babylon, Persia, Arabia, Java, Central Asia, Greece, Rome, and Egypt, and in many instances, of course he went by sea. We have only to know how to read the myths and legends to perceive that half of them point to the Indian mercantile marine. Herodotus reports a monster in the Persian Gulf, which has generally been regarded as but the monster gooseberry, or the sea-serpent of its time. It had the body of a fish, the head of a man, and the women's feet at the end of its tail. It had also a feminine gift of speech. During the day it taught arts and sciences for the benefit of the rude Chaldeans, but at night, it plunged back into the sea. What was this, as interpreted at the meeting, but an ancient ship, freighted with the Aryan Hindu on a missionary expedition? He put off to his boat, after holding the classes on shore, and his whole scheme was but a University extension movement from the Ganges. Most of the people from the "Far East" of ancient record were evidently of the same race. Queen Esther's "white and blue hangings" have been indentified as Indian bargains—and by a lady writer, who ought to know. A distinguished Chinese pilgrim, who wrote not much more than two thousand years ago, and may, therefore, be called modern, found Java entirely peopled by Hindus. These people were, in fact, the typical old salts of their time. At Baku, on the Caspian, Mr. Marsh discovered a solitary Brahmin, still worshipping the sacred flame. It rose from a tube in the earth, where some immemorial ancestor has struck it. At any rate, the holy man said that he was a Brahmin, though the traveller thought, he looked very much like a fugitive sepoy of the Mutiny. That, however, he strongly denied. The Rig-Veda, one of the oldest extant records of the ancient world, is, in parts, almost a

nautical publication. Still, the earlier Editor was probably a landsman, for he is disposed to make too much of voyages on the ocean, "where there is nothing to give support, nothing to rest upon, nothing to cling to," this seems to suggest a total default of sea-legs. Mann has hints on freighting and on mercantile insurance. "For a long passage, the freight must be proportioned to places and times, but this must be understood of passages up and down rivers. At sea, there can be no settled price." He, too, was probably happiest ashore. After this, asked the learned lecturer, "are we to sit in pondering silence and fantastic deliberation to determine the propriety or impropriety of sea-voyaging by the Hindus?"

The prohibition or fancied prohibition, is, therefore, entirely modern. It seems to proceed from a sense of the difficulty in carrying-proper caste nourishment at sea. Saltjunk would, of course, be a contamination, and there are difficulties about the water. But all this is only a question of ways and means. A Native agency supplies pure food at the railway stations, and on the river steamers, and Native passengers use it without the slightest risk of the forfeiture of caste. Moreover, certain practical men who trade to distant parts carry parched rice, flour, and treacle with them, and, so long as they keep to these, find that they lose no shred of holiness. They also carry water of their own special tap. The treacle may add to their sufferings, but then sea-sickness is not a crime. The sea-water itself is perfectly harmless for bathing purposes, nor has it that negative quality alone. One of the highest living Pundits specially consulted has declared that the moral merit of bathing in the sea exceed that of bathing in the Ganges, the former being, indeed, the repository, of all the sacred waters of the world. If there be no unholiness in washing in it, there can be none in crossing it. This authority does not stand alone in his opinion. For the purpose of this movement a *vyavastha*, or opinion has been taken of certain eminent Brahmin Pundits of Bengal, and, while not exactly enthusiastic, it is encouraging. They agree that neither a sea-voyage nor a residence in England "comes within the category of heinous transgressions, involving degradation, and that heavy penances are not provided for it." The opinion is signed by Mohamohopadhyaya Dinabandhu Nayaratna, and some dozens more. A still more authoritative deliverance, if we may say so without offence, is to the same effect. Messrs. Cook & Son, to the great joy of the Native promoters of the movement, say that it is quite practicable to travel by sea, and to live in foreign countries, without any violation of the Hindu usage. And a Native firm in Bombay has gone so far as to advertise a steamer for a voyage to Chicago next March. Hindus will be only taken as passengers. There will be Brahmin cooks, Hindu servants, and even a Hindu Doctor.

The last, however, is only for persons of extremely tender conscience. He will prescribe on the "orthodox model," if any patients of the English Doctor scruple to use ordinary drugs. New water tanks will be carried for Hindus only. No animal will be killed on board—the Hindus having a horror of taking life. For this reason even fishing will be prohibited. The real trial of their orthodoxy awaits them at Chicago. A great congress of religions, which is to be one of the attractions of the Exhibition, is expected to show that all the dogmas of all the faiths are as interchangeable as the parts of a Waterbury watch."

The Statesman writes :—

"There are probably few religious or social systems more essentially plastic than Hinduism; hardly any more tolerant within certain limits of changes which have once established themselves. In order to bring about such a consensus, what is chiefly needed is arguments to convince Hindus, not that their remote ancestry made sea-voyages, which they already know; not that the Shastras leave them free to change their customs in the matter, which is no proof that they ought to change them or would even be justified in changing them; but that it would really conduce to the well being of their society generally, and not merely of an Anglicised member of it, here and there, to change them. To us it seems that the arguments available for this purpose are overwhelming the *res angustæ domi* being the most powerful of all of them. If it could but be brought home to Hindus generally, how intimate is the connection between their comparative poverty as a people, and the disabilities under which they lie in this respect we believe all opposition worth considering would speedily disappear. Let them look at the enormous excess of England's imports over her exports and reflect how it has come to pass that possessing as she does neither gold mines nor silver mines she can go on year after year paying for the balance and still grow richer. It is because year after year for many generations she has invested her profits instead of hiding them in a napkin and has thus become a creditor of all the world. Could she have done this if custom had prevented her citizens from crossing the seas to seek the means of employing their capital to the best advantage? There is only one answer to the question. The Natives of India on the other hand adopt a diametrically opposite course Year after year there is a certain balance due to them—a comparatively small one it is true—on account of the sale of their produce. And what do they do

with it. They take it—what remains of it that is to say after discharging their foreign obligation—in silver and gold, and instead of investing this silver and gold reproductively they for the most part bury it, or turn it into ornaments. How can they expect to be anything but poor, when, from one year to another, they thus hide in a napkin, or convert to unprofitable uses, all that survives of the fruits of their labour which they do not actually consume? Under such circumstances, even if they were not, unfortunately, the debtors of others, they could still hardly hope to grow in wealth. Yet, as long as they are cribbed, cabined, and confined by the disabling customs against which this movement is directed, it is practically impossible for them to turn over a new leaf in this respect. Far from being in a position to invest their savings in foreign enterprise, they cannot even acquire the experience necessary to enable them to invest them with advantage in the development of their own industrial resources.”

Cook's Traveller's Gazette writes :—

“Judging from the statement of those most competent to form an opinion on the subject, we gather that the opponents of the measure have very little of real weight to urge against it. Indeed, so far as the *practicability* of the movement is concerned, we, from our experience in these matters, are in a position to say that no objections on that score need be raised, either as regards the arrangements on board steamers, or the residence in England, and we shall be glad to give the promoters of the movement any information they may require upon this point.”

OPINIONS OF PUBLIC.

General Assembly's Meeting.

A public meeting, under the auspices of the Students' Club, was held on Tuesday, the 8th instant, in the Hall of the General Assembly's Institution, to consider whether sea-voyages are prohibited by the Hindoo religion. Baboo Bunkim Behari Mitter, B. A., read a paper on the subject, and we are told that "he conclusively proved" by quotations from the Vedas, Purans, Smritis, and dramatic works that our *shasters* do not forbid sea-voyages." As the lecturer succeeded in satisfying his audience regarding the correctness of his conclusion, we congratulate both him, and them, and hope that they will not meet with any opposition from Baboo orthodoxy.—*Rais and Rayyet.* 1

Presidency College's Meeting.

A well-attended meeting of the Presidency College Union was held on Saturday afternoon at the College premises, to discuss the question of sea-voyages among the Hindus, Professor C. R. Wilson, M. A., the President of the Union took the chair. Babu Jatindra Nath Mitra opened the debate in favour of the proposed reform while Babu Bhusan Chunder Day, B. A. led the opposite party. A lively and interesting discussion, lasting for about two hours followed. The President wound up the debate by saying that though he was incompetent to take part in it from not being a Hindu, he hoped that, as the experiment of a union between the East and West had been but recently begun they would all try to make it a success. He then put the motion in favour of the movement to the vote. It not being clear from the raising of hands whether the motion was carried or not a division was demanded and obtained. The majority voting for the motion, it was declared to be carried.—*The Bengalee.* 2.

Shovabazar's Meeting.

A Largely-attended important public meeting of the Hindoos representing all sections of the community, was held on Friday evening last at the late Maharajah Komul Krishna Bahadoor's residence to consider the

question of sea-voyage among Hindoos, and to hear Baboo Suresh Chunder Dutt, B. A., Head Master of the Calcutta Institution, who read a paper on "Sea-Voyages amongst Hindoos," Maharajah Bahadur, Sir Narendra Krishna, K. C. I. E., presided, and amongst those present, were the Hon'ble Dr. Gura Dass Bannerji, Sir Romesh Chunder Mitter, Kt. Mahamahapadhyaya Pundit Mohesh Chunder Nayanatna, C. I. E., Pundits Madhusudan Smritiratna, Kamakhya Nath Tarkabagish, Chunder Kisore Tarkaratha, Issur Chunder Vidyaratna and Herambo Nath Bhattacharji, Rai Bahadurs, Jagadananda Mukerji, Koilas Chunder Mookerjee, Durgagutty Bannerjee, Hem Chunder Ker, and Sib Chunder Bannerji, Dis. Surya Kumar Sarvadhikari, Jugadis Chunder Lahiri, Umesh Chunder Mitter, Roy Jatindra Nath Chowdhry, and Sarat Chunder Dass, C. I. E., Baboo Nobo Gopal Mitter, Baboo Nayalankar Nilmony Mukerji, M. A., B. L., Mr. Manomohun Ghose, Barrister-at-Law, Baboos Norendro Nath Sen, Surendra Nath Bannerji, Sham Lal Mitter, Chunder Kally Ghose, Vakils, High Court, Mati Lal Halder, B. L., Mansiff, Baboos Charu Chunder Sirkar, M. A., B. L., Bhupendra Nath Bose, M. A., B. L., Attorney-at-Law, Rameswar Mandal, B. L., Kabirajes, Kally Prosunno Sen Kaviratna, Gopal Krishna Deb, Kabi Chintamoney, Gossain Dass Gupta, Editor, *Sanghad Probhakar*, Pundit Jibanand Vidyasagar, B. A., Baboos Sib Chunder Gui, M. A., B. L., Manindra Nath Bhattacharjee, M. A., B. L., Vakil, High Court, Russick Lal Roy, Debendra Nath Mukerji, Nanda Lal Mukherjee, B. A., Gopal Chunder Mukerji, Bankim Behari Mitter, B. A., Lal Vilhari Mitra, Bepin Behary Mitter, Baboo Surendra Nath Mitter, B. A., Pundit Kali Kumar Kaviratna and others. Amongst the European gentlemen, who were kind enough to be present at the meeting, we noticed the Hon'ble H. H. Risley, B. A., C. S., C. I. E., and the Rev. Mr. Whitehead. Great enthusiasm prevailed, with a vote of thanks to the chair, the meeting broke up — *The Indian Mirror*. 8.

Albert Hall's Meeting.

Seldom did the Albert Hall witness such an enthusiastic meeting as was held there on Sunday last under the presidency of Babu Norendro Nath Sen. In spite of the inclemency of the weather the hall was crowded, and many had to go away for want of seats. There were nearly one thousand Hindus present. Among them we noticed Maharaj-Kumar Benoya Krishna Bahadur, Babus Mati Lal Halder, M. A., B. L. Mansiff, Alipore, Sham Lal Mitter, Vakil, High Court, Dr. Omesh Chunder Mitter, Dr. Brajendra Nath Bannerji, Kabiraj Josodanandan Sircar, Babu Sirish

Chunder Biswas, M. A., B. L., Babu Kailash Chunder Bose, Deputy Magistrate, Pundit Jibananda Vidyasagar, B. A., Babus Gopal Chunder Mukerji, Rasik Lal Roy, Suresh Chunder Dutt, B. A., Head Master Calcutta Institution, and Debendra Nath Mukerji. The chair was occupied by Babu Surendro Nath Sen who amidst loud cheers opened the meeting by urging upon the audience that the time had arrived when they could no longer debate and speculate but must put their words to practice. He was thoroughly convinced of the incalculable benefits arising from this forward step. He did not find any shadow of reason in the so-called arguments of those who abuse the advocates of the sea-voyage movement. The Chairman then asked Babu Debendra Nath Mukerji to address the meeting who addressed the meeting for two hours. It was a magnificent oration. The speaker completely carried the audience with him, and brought home to them the utility of this absolutely needed reform. He showed the utter worthlessness of the opposition. The speech was so much appreciated and admitted that it is intended to publish it in a pamphlet form. Babu Mono Mohun Bose, Pundit Jibananda Vidyasagar and a few others then addressed the meeting. The Chairman then asked those who sympathised with the movement to testify their sympathy by raising their hands at which whole assembly amidst cries of "all, all" raised their hands. The Chairman then asked those who opposed to the movement to raise their hands to which call not a single voice responded. The meeting then dispersed.—*The Indian Mirror*. 4.

Meeting at the Oxford Mission's Hall.

A largely attended meeting of Bengalis was held on last Friday evening at the Oxford Mission Lecture Hall, in Cornwallis Street, to discuss the subject of sea-voyages by Hindus. Babu Surendro Nath Bannerji, who presided, opened the proceedings by calling upon Babu Anundo Churn Mitter, to deliver his lecture.

Babu Anundo Churn Mitter, who then addressed the meeting, said that notwithstanding his little knowledge and ignorance of the Hindu Shastras he had consented to speak a few words on a subject of much vital importance to the Hindus. To have a higher education, one should go to England, for it was an evident fact that a Graduate of an English University was far superior to a Graduate of an Indian University, and they would also find that the system of an English University was far different from the system of an Indian University. For instance, if a student in

India, who was going up for his M. A. Examination failed in one subject he failed altogether whereas in England if he failed in mathematics, and passed in English, he got his degree of M. A. with honours in English. Unless they went to England, they would never be able to lay before the public the great hidden truths which were in science. All learned men had recommended that no nation would rise to eminence and prosperity unless attention was paid to science; but what science had they in India? After referring to the advantages of technical education, which he said would give employment to the paupers of India, the speaker dwelt upon the necessity and importance of sea-voyages amongst the Hindus. The great majority of this countrymen believed that the Sastras forbade sea-voyages but they believed what was untrue; but if they read the Shastras they would find that sea-voyages were not forbidden to the Hindus. Their ancestors used to make sea-voyages and those Hindus of the present age who travelled to England and other countries simply followed the example of their forefathers. He saw no reason why Hindus who went to England but observed the rules and regulations enjoined by the Hindu religion should be put out of caste on their return to India. In conclusion the speaker said that the only way to remove the prejudices existing among the ignorant masses regarding sea-voyages, was by educating them so that they would thus learn what the Shastras really enjoined upon them.

The Rev. H. Whitehead in addressing the meeting, said that he had no claim whatever to speak on this subject and was totally unprepared to say anything on a subject of such deep importance to the Hindu community. He had risen to say a few words at the request of the Chairman not from a religious point of view, but simply from a practical point of view. He did not know whether the Shastras forbade them to make sea-voyages, and he did not wish any Hindu to act contrary to his religion but he would speak briefly as to what he believed the practical advantages would be to the people of India, if it was found that they could, consistently with their religion, visit England. Babu Anunda Churn Mitter had said that students in India who failed at an examination in one subject failed altogether but that was not the case in England. If Indian students went to England with that hope, he was afraid from his own experience they would be grievously disappointed. But, at the same time there were two reasons why Natives of India should visit England. In the first place, he thought it would tend very much to widen and broaden the minds of the people of this country; and in the second place, he thought and hoped that it would tend very much to promote more friendly and intimate relations between the two races. No doubt in this country

the Europeans and people of India stood in an artificial relation to one another, and sea-voyages would go far towards extending social intercourse between the people of this country and Europe. Several other speakers next addressed the meeting, all of whom were in favour of sea-voyage.—*The Indian Mirror*. 5.

Calcutta Institution's Meeting.

An enthusiastic meeting, in connection with the sea-voyage movement in Bengal, was held last Saturday at 5-0 P. M., in the premises of the Calcutta Institution. There were present, amongst others, Malsaraj-Kumar Benoy Krishna, Pandit Nilmony Mukerji M. A., B. L., of the Presidency College, Chandrodaya Bidyabinode, Kali Churn Kabiratna, Babus Sham Lal Mitter, Mati Lal Halder, M. A., B. L., and Nabo Gopal Mitter. Pandit Nilmoni Mukerji, who was voted to the chair, opened the proceedings of the meeting by saying that he had certain hesitation in occupying the chair that day, for anything that he would have to say in his presidential address, might, he was afraid, go in some way to anticipate the decision of the Committee, recently formed at the last Sobhabazar meeting to consider the question of sea-voyages among the Hindus, from the Shastric point of view. But that he would not do. He was himself a member of that Committee, and he knew, it would not be fair for him to say much on the subject before the Committee have come to a definite conclusion. But one word, he felt bound to say, was that he was conscious of the many benefits that voyage to sea would give to the people, by opening up the way to Western education and enterprise, by cementing the relation between the rulers and the ruled, and by elevating and broadening the hearts of the travellers in many ways. He did not believe that his countrymen would throw such benefits away, if the Hindu Shastras would permit them to avail themselves of those opportunities. He hoped that the many speakers, who were to give addresses that day, would make matters clear, and he called on Babu Jogeswar Bannerji, the Editor of the *Hitabadi*, to read his paper on the subject.

The lecturer showed, in an able and interesting way, and by copious references to Rig Ved, Manu, Barahapurana, and other authoritative writings of the Hindus, that sea-voyages were nowhere prohibited in the Hindu Shastras. The only prohibitory passage that occurred in the Brihat Narada Purana has been explained in different ways, and the lecturer had the authority of Pandit Kasiram, the late Tara Nath Tarka-

bachaspati, and even of the Shastrakara Parasara himself, to say that the passage alluded to, prohibited sea-voyages only when they were undertaken for some motive. The lecturer strongly objected to the statement, so often made, that mere residence in a Mlecha country polluted the Hindus, and alluded, in support of his view, to Srimanta Sowdagar and Bejoy Singha, who made voyages to, and lived in, a Mlecha country, of old, but did not lose their caste, nor was required to go through any expiation. Babu Nobo Gopal Mitter spoke next, and made a great impression on the audience by his witty and ingenious speech. He proved that it was possible to live in England, and remain a Hindu, and showed how ridiculously nonsensical the whole system of Prayaschita was, which held out the prospect of easy pardon, and thus encouraged men to go to England in direct transgression of the law, and in wilful commission of sin. Seven other speakers followed, all of whom more or less supported the movement. The President then asked those, who supported the movement, to testify their sympathy by raising their hands, at which the whole assembly, with the exception of a "microscopic minority" of three or four only, amidst cries of "all, all" raised their hands.—*The Indian Mirror*. 6.

Meeting at Bansberia-Hugly.

On the fifth and the last day, Baboo Surendra Nath Bannerji was in the chair. Mohashoy Kshitindra Deb Roy read a paper on "The Influence and Travel upon the Mind with special reference to sea-voyages among the ancient Hindus." The Meeting was unanimous in favour of sea-voyages.—*The Indian Mirror*, 11th February, 1892. 7.

Meeting at Bombay.

Under the presidency of Dr. Jamnadas, young Jainis of Bombay met the other day to discuss the question of England-going. Several speakers said that there was nothing in the Jain religion to prohibit any Jain from visiting foreign countries. The President remarked that the Jains are more liberal than the followers of any other religion of India, because they were believers in the Universal Brotherhood of man, and they cannot object to travelling in foreign lands.—*The Bengalee*. 8.

Meeting at Tamluk-Midnapur.

A crowded meeting was held yesterday at Tamluk in support of the sea-voyage movement, Babu Chundra Shekar Kar, Sub-Divisional Officer, presiding. Several speakers addressed the meeting. Dr. Umesh Chunder Mitter, Babu Sam Lall Mitter, Vakil, High Court, Sital Proshad Ghose, B. L., Pleader, and Kherode Nath Shastri, M. A., Pleader, were elected delegates to the forthcoming Provincial Conference on the subject to be held at Calcutta on the 13th instant.—*Telegram in the Indian Mirror.* 9.

Meeting at Allahabad.

Babu Devendra Nath Mukerji, from Calcutta delivered a very interesting lecture on the Hindu sea-voyage question last Sunday, the 20th August, at the Congress Hall at Allahabad. He proved, by Shastric quotations and historical evidences, that there was nothing in sea-voyage which would militate against the most approved form of Hindu orthodoxy. The arguments were forcible, and the illustrations apt and copious. The lecture was well attended, and appeared to be quite convincing.—*The Indian Mirror, 23rd August 1893.* 10.

Meeting at Midnapur.

An influential and well-attended meeting in favour of the Sea-voyage movement took place yesterday at the Bar Association rooms, Babu Raghu Nath Dass, M. A., B. L., Chairman, Midnapore Municipality, presiding. Many respectable and orthodox families of the District heartily support the cause. A statement, signed by the leaders of intelligent public opinion, will shortly be published.—*Telegram in the Bengalee.* 11.

Meeting at Benares.—A.

An enthusiastic and crowded meeting was held at the instance of the Benares Debating Club, supporting the Sea-Voyage movement. The Hon'ble Ramkali Chowdhuri presided on the occasion, and Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee addressed the meeting.—*Telegram in the Bengalee.* 12.

Meeting at Lucknow.

Under the auspices of the Bengali Young Men's Association Babu Debendra Nath Mukerji, of Calcutta, delivered a lecture on "Hindu Sea-voyage: its Aim and Object" at the Christian College Hall at Lucknow on last Friday evening, the 1st September. His delivery is excellent, and arguments are unassailable. The chair was taken by Babu Sham Lal Mitter, Vakil of the Calcutta High Court. The whole audience unanimously expressed their opinion in favour of the Hindu sea-voyage movement.—*The Indian Mirror*, September 7, 1893. 13.

Meeting at Benares.—B.

A public meeting was held on the 11th instant (last Monday evening) in connection with the Hindu sea-voyage movement, at the residence of the late Babu Chandi Churn Biswas, Bengalitola, the chair being occupied by Pundit Ram Misser Shastri, the renowned Professor of Philosophy, Benares College. The lecturer, Babu Debendra Nath Mukerji, delivered an able speech on "The Object and Necessities of undertaking Sea-voyage." He cited innumerable evidences in support of the movement from the time of Rig Veda down to Kabi-Kankan, Makund Ram Chuckerbutty, and viewed the question in all its bearings, viz., for political agitation—technical education and commercial enterprise. The worthy President spoke eloquently. He said that it was absolutely necessary to go by sea to remote countries, in the interests of trade. In the course of his speech, he strongly condemned mere speeches, and said that a fund should be raised from the men of light and leading throughout India to carry out the noble object. The attendance was good. The hearts of the Pundits and the audience were with the learned lecturer.—*The Indian Mirror*, September 16, 1893. 14.

. Meeting of the Bengal provincial conference. The following resolution was passed :—

"That in the opinion of this Conference the time has come when, having regard to the important, political, educational and industrial issues which are involved, a determined effort should be made for the solution of what is known as the Sea-voyage question; the Conference welcomes efforts which have already been made in this direction, and would rejoice if the labours of the Committee recently appointed at the Sobha Bazar Meeting, would meet with the measure of success which they richly deserve."

APPENDIX.

Under the presidency of the Moharaj Kumar Benoy Krishno Deb Bahadoor, the following address was read before a public meeting held in connection with the Students' Club at the General Assembly's Institution Hall, 8th December 1891 :—

"Mr. President and Gentlemen.—I appear before you this afternoon with great diffidence and hesitation, owing to the meagreness of my abilities to address such a learned and respectable assembly as this, and the great importance of the subject we have chosen to discuss this evening, and upon which Hindoo public opinion is so much divided, and which is at present agitating the minds of our educated countrymen, and on the proper solution of which depends the welfare and prosperity of this great country, which in the inscrutable ways of God's Benign Providence has been placed under the fostering care of England,—England the patroness of letters, the protectress of peace, the championess of liberty, the home of genuine freedom, and the true friend of the down-trodden and the oppressed. It is far from my intention, gentlemen, to offend the feelings of any section of my countrymen, either orthodox or heterodox, and I should indeed be sorry if any one of them happen to take offence for my simply placing before you the views held by our great Aryan ancestors in connection with the existence of the practice of sea-voyage among the Hindoos in ancient and mediæval India. I will endeavour to show in this paper by quotations from the *shastras*, to which no exception can be taken by any one within the pale of Hinduism that the custom prevailed in the continent of India both in the Vedic and Puranic ages.

I hope, however, that you will kindly give me a patient and indulgent hearing, and I won't be long in trespassing upon your valuable time,—in consideration of the momentous nature of the subject, which ought to engage the attention of every true-born son of India, now more than ever, seeing that the intellectual, social, and political advancement of this down-trodden country depends mainly on the closeness of its contact with the British Isles, and upon the good-will and friendly feelings of the people and the Parliament of England. The great disposer of all events has evidently an object in having placed India under British rule, and that motive cannot but be for the welfare and aggrandisement of the teeming millions of this vast peninsula.

No right thinking man can possibly be blind to the manifold benefits which one nation derives by contact and intercourse with other nations. It is a well-known fact, which I think cannot be gain-said by any, that India under the British rule has made considerable progress in civilization, enlightenment, and general advancement.

Since the dispersion of the Aryan race from our common primeval home in Central Asia, *Iran*, or somewhere else about the mountains of Caucasus in the distant past, the West has been brought into closer contact with the East by England's conquest in India, and though, doubtless, the East has learnt a good deal from the West, there can be no question that the West has to learn certain important lessons from this great land of Bharat. But my object this evening, gentlemen, is not to discuss the great historical problem as to the mutual advantages which nations derive from each other by reciprocal intercourse, but simply to solve the question whether sea-voyage is consonant with the fundamental principles, tenets, and teachings of the Hindoo *shastras*.

The opposition party maintain that a true Hindoo cannot undertake a voyage to Europe, or cross the *Kalapani*, among others for the three following reasons :—

(1) Because England is a *Melachadesa*, or a country inhabited by men who do not perform the sacrificial observances of the Hindoos, and who are in every respect devoid of Sadachara (सदाचार), i. e., the usages of the Hindoos in the palmy days of Brahminism.

(2) Because in proceeding to England one has to cross the ocean by a ship, or a seagoing vessel, and cannot do this by adopting a land route.

(3) Because in going to England one has necessarily to live on what is called forbidden food or food cooked by Melachas and Yavanas, or defiled by their touch.

Let us now consider what is meant by the term *Melachadesa*. Menu, the greatest of Hindoo Law-givers, defines *Melachadesa* as

कृष्णसारसु चरति मृगो यत्र स्वभावतः ।

स ज्ञेयो यज्ञियो देशो त्वेच्छदेशस्ततः परः ॥

"Where the black antelope is indigenous, that country is to be known as a land fit for sacrifices ; the *Melacha* land is beyond it."

Though this definition of the great Hindoo Law-giver applied only to the different countries constituting the Indian Peninsula, yet according to the spirit of the ruling countries situated outside the limits of India cannot be called *Melachadesa* where the antelopes roam and graze in a state of nature, such as Russia, Siam, and many other countries.

Let us now see what countries are given in the order of preference, and especially recommended in the Institutes of Menu as fit places where a holy and pious Hindoo should reside—

सरस्वती दृषद्वत्यो देवनद्यो र्यदन्तरं ।
 तं देवनिर्मितं देशं ब्रह्मावर्त्तं प्रज्ञक्षते ॥
 तस्मिन् देशे य आचारः पारम्पर्यं क्रमागतः ।
 वर्णानां सान्तरालानां स सदाचार उच्यते ॥
 कुरुक्षेत्रञ्च मत्स्याञ्च पञ्चालाः शूरसेनकाः ।
 एष ब्रह्मर्षि देशो वै ब्रह्मावर्त्तादनन्तरः ॥
 एतद्देशप्रसूतस्य सकाशादग्रजन्मनः ।
 स्वं स्वं चरितं शिञ्चेरन् पृथिव्यां सर्वमानवाः ॥
 हिमवद्विन्ध्ययोर्मध्यं यत्प्राग्विनशनादपि ।
 प्रत्यगेव प्रयागाच्च मध्यदेशः प्रकीर्तितः ॥
 आसमुद्रात्तु वै पूर्व्वीदासमुद्रात्तु पश्चिमात् ।
 तयोरिवान्तरं गिर्योरार्यावर्त्तं विदुर्वृधाः ॥

The country which is between the divine rivers Sarasvati and Drisadvati, that land fixed by the gods (the wise) called *Brahmavarta*.

"What custom of the four castes and the mixed castes has been handed down by course of succession in that country that is called good custom."

"Kuruksheetra, Matsya, Panchala, Swrasenaka are indeed Brahmarsi land, next to Brahmavarta. All men in the world should learn their own proper behaviour from a Brahmin born in that country."

The country between the Himalaya and Vindhya mountains which is to the east of Vinacana, i. e., the terminus of the Sarasvati, and to the west of Prayaga, is called the central country.

The land indeed between those two mountains, extending to the Eastern and to the Western sea, the wise call Aryavarta.

Brahmavarta, Brahmarsi Desa, Madhya Desa, and Aryavarta are mentioned by Menu as the fit places where true Hindoos should dwell. Amongst these places, the first preference is given to *Brahmavarta*, and secondly to *Brahmarsi Desa*.

The site of Brahmavarta is a small tract of land a little to the north of Thanaswar,—the modern Panipat. But at present the majority of the population of this part of India is composed of Mahomedans, whose manners and customs are followed even by the Hindoos living in that part of the country. Brahmarshi Desa includes Kurukshetra, which corresponds with Thanaswar; Panchala, which corresponds with Kanouj near Delhi; Swrasenaka, which corresponds with Mithila.

From the above *ślokas*, it is evident that the Panjab, Cashmere, Lower Bengal, Assam, and the whole of Southern India on the south of the Vindhya range come in the category of *Melachadesa*, and living in those parts of India is just the same as living in England or in any other part of the world, according to the views held by Menu. But for all this, the Brahmins of Lower Bengal or Southern India do not look upon themselves in any way inferior to the Brahmins of Northern India. The interdiction to proceed to a *Melachadesa* was simply a *शमन* or check, and not a *निषेध* or absolute prohibition, and at the present moment the ruling is “more honoured in the breach than in the observance.”

Travelling and residence in a *Melachadesa* was a prevalent custom in India from time immemorial, which we shall presently try to prove:

Our two grand epic poems *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* furnish us with the evidence in this matter. Vasistha, the greatest of Hindoo sages, went to China, and partook of the food of the Chinese whilst in their country.

Ram Chandra—the greatest of Aryan Monarchs that ever sat on the throne of Ayodhya—went to Ceylon, passing through the Deccan and other parts of Southern India.

Mahabharata tells us that Arjuna visited and conquered several *Melacha* countries in the course of his great conquest *दिशिक्रम*.

Let us now turn our attention to the commerce of ancient India, both foreign and internal. It is asserted by some that the Hindoos were quite ignorant of commerce and maritime trade. That such an opinion is a mere assumption, and not founded on facts, I shall presently show. India had mercantile connection with Russia, Persia, Arabia, China, Babylonia, Ava, Pegu, Malacca, Asia Minor, Egypt, Ethiopia, Syria, Assyria, Phoenicia, Greece, Rome, and many other places which it is needless to mention.

Periplus, Plinny, and Colonel Wilford speak of India's mercantile connection with China from the earliest times. It is mentioned in “Sakuntala,” Canto I, that there was a communication between India and China.

चीनांशुकमिव केतोः प्रतिवातं नीयमानस्य.

We learn from Macpherson's annals of commerce that India was the chief emporium of trade, and had commercial relations with Persia and Arabia. We also learn from Raghuvansa that Raghu extended his conquest as far as Persia, which will be evident from the following *shloka* in the Raghuvansa :—

पारसीकान् ततो जेतुं प्रतस्थे स्थलवत्स ना ।

We learn from Heeren's Asiatic Nations (Volume I, p. 210) that there was a direct communication by land through Bactria, between India and Babylon, as early as 1659 B. C. The Phœnicians, the Romans, the Greeks, and the Jews had frequent and regular commercial relations with India both by land and sea. But as these communications were made more by sea than by the land route, we shall treat this questions separately.

There are numerous instances to prove that the ancient Hindoos visited and resided in foreign countries.

Colonel Wilford (Asiatic Researches, Volume XI, p. 105) says :—"Some of the Ambassadors were off as far as Spain, others visited Alexandria and Egypt, where Ptolemy in the third century saw and conversed with them. Some of these Ambassadors had long conference at Babylon, or rather Seleucia with the famous Bar de Sanes, and pilgrimages to the Se'hon of Mohabbogah now Mabog or Bambyke in Syria were very common, according to Lucian, as cited by the author of the ancient Universal History." The Hindoos made several immigrations to foreign countries. A band of Hindoos settled in *colchis*, where they are still Hindoos. Colonel Tod, in his Rajasthan, conjectures that the Heraclides of the Greeks were probably a colony of the *Haricula* or *Jodu Bangsa* of the Hindoos. Hicthias asserts that the Sindi of Thrace were the inhabitants of India.

We have said before that the whole of Southern India, Orissa, Assam, Cashmore, Bengal, and some other parts of Hindoostan were regarded by Menu as *Melachadesa* ; and the same view is also expressed by almost all the writers of the Purans. According to Baudhayana, Bengal is a *Melachadesa*. Devala says :—

सिन्धुसौराष्ट्रसौवीरान् तथा प्रत्यन्तवासिनः ।

अङ्गवङ्गकलिङ्गान्श्च गत्वा संस्कारमर्हति ॥

Govinda Nanda, in his commentary, says :—

अङ्गवङ्गकलिङ्गेषु सौराष्ट्रमगधेषु च ।

तीर्थयात्रां विना गच्छन् पुनःसंस्कारमर्हति ॥

Again, in Matsya Purana—

कृतघ्नानास्तिका स्तब्धस्तेच्छदेशनिवासिनः ।

त्रिशङ्कु करवीरान्ध्रा श्वीनद्रविडकुंकनाः ॥

एतांस्तु वर्जयेत् सर्वान् आङ्गकालेषु धर्मविद् ।

It is quite evident from the above quotations that Bengal itself is in the same category with a *Meluchalesa*, and that a rigid Hindoo coming to or residing in मोराष्ट्र, मोरौर or even in Bengal, has to perform मंश्रात्र or certain observances. Now we ask whether any Hindoo of the most orthodox type, living in Bengal or in other places mentioned in the text, performs the required मंश्रात्र. It is evident from the text of Matsya Purana, cited above, that a Hindoo residing in a *Meluchalesa* and a Hindoo residing in Bengal, मोराष्ट्र, कलिङ्ग अङ्ग, and other *Melucha* places mentioned in the text are both placed in the same category i. e., both are excluded from being invited or fed in the *shradha* ceremony or performance of obsequial rites.

Hemadri Parosesh Khanda—

त्रिपूर्वः काण्डपृष्ठश्च यवनो भरतर्षभ ।

अक्रियो ब्राह्मणस्यैव आह्वेनार्हति केतनं ॥

It was a custom prevalent in ancient India to feed the Brahmins of spotless character and well versed in the Vedas on the day of the *shradha* ceremony. But as the Brahmins of the present day are not what they used to be, this custom has fallen into disuse; and in the absence of a true Brahmin in flesh and blood, we have substituted a Brahmin made of *kusa* grass on the occasion of performance of the *Shradha* ceremony instead of a living one.

But as no Brahmin at the present day can ever dream of being entitled to receiving केतन or an invitation to obtain the articles of the *shradha* on the day and at the time of its performance, on the ground of his having fallen from his original condition of purity, the ruling contained in the *shloka* quoted above as regards केतन is now practically a dead letter.

It is worthy of notice that within the vast domain of the Hindoo *shastras*, no authority could be found in any of the *shastras* that the mere circumstance of a Hindoo taking up his residence in a *Melacha* country leads to social ostracism and the forfeiture of his right to be called and looked upon as a Hindoo—

उषित्वा यत्र कुत्रापि स्वधर्मं प्रतिपालयन् ।

षट् कर्माणि प्रकुर्वीरन्निति धर्मस्य निश्चयः ॥

Brahmins residing *anywhere* (i. e., whether in a *Melacha* or non-*Melacha* country) can preserve their own *dharma* (virtue), provided they perform their six cardinal duties as laid down in the institutes of Menu, Ch. X, sloka 75, namely,

“Giving instruction in and perusing the holy text, giving sacrifice themselves and also offering sacrifice (for others), giving and receiving presents, also (these are) the six occupations of him whose birth is highest.”

So it is altogether wrong on the part of those who stigmatise our England-retained countrymen as non-Hindoos simply on the ground of their having proceeded to a *Melacha* country. A Hindoo residing in Bengal and the other *Melacha* countries mentioned in the text does not consider himself in any way inferior to a Hindoo of Northern India, nor is the Hindoo public opinion against him. I see no earthly reason, therefore, why a Hindoo gentleman returned from England should be considered as an outcast, or a non-Hindoo. These rulings, however, refer only to the twice-born classes, i. e., to the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisayas.

As regards the Sudras, there is no restriction whatever for their living in a *Melacha* country. Menu says—

शूद्रस्तु यस्मिन् कस्मिन् वा निवसेद्वृत्ति कर्षितः ।

A Sudra distressed for a livelihood may abide in any place whatever. (This *sloka* also goes to show that a Sudra can go anywhere. This of course does not preclude him from going to England for the sake of his own advancement.)

We have tried to answer as far as lies in our power the question whether a Hindoo by sojourning or dwelling in a *Melacha* country commits any sin, or becomes an outcast, according to our *shastras*. I would observe *en passant* that, as far as I am aware, it is nowhere laid down in all the authoritative Hindoo books on Prayaschitwa that the performance of any Prayaschitwa or expiation is necessary for a Hindoo who goes to or

resides in a *Malacca* country, for such action of his is no sin according to the *shastras*.

Now we shall endeavour to meet the second objection, *viz.*, whether going to transoceanic countries is consistent with the tenets of our *shastras*. It is a prevalent belief in some quarters that the Hindoos were utter strangers to maritime trade, and were unacquainted with ship-building. There cannot be a more erroneous notion than this. Those acquainted with Sanskrit know that the ancient Hindoos made great progress in navigation, and travelled far and wide by sea. That sea-voyage was prevalent in ancient India can be gathered from the following hymns in the *Rig Veda*, the most authoritative and ancient scripture of the Hindoos—

आयद्रुहाव वरुणश्च नावं प्रयत्समुद्रमीर्वयाव मध्यं ।

अधियदपां सुमिष्वरवि प्रप्रेक्ष ईक्षयावहैशुमेर्वां ॥

1st Astaka Adhya 8, Mandala 1—

Sloka 3—

तुग्रोह भुज्युमश्चिनोदमेघे रयिं न कश्चिन्मृवां अवाहाः

तमुह्यु नीभिरात्मन्वतीभिरं तरिच प्रुझिरपोदकाभिः ॥

Sloka 4—

तिस्रः क्षपस्त्रिरहाति ब्रजझिर्नासता भुज्युमुह्युः पतङ्गैः

समुद्रस्य धन्वर्वाद्रस्य पारित्रीभीरथैः शतपङ्क्तिः षलस्यैः ॥

Sloka 5—

अनारंभणे तदवीरयेथा मनास्थाने अग्रभणे समुद्रे ।

यदश्चिना उह्युभूज्युमस्तं शतारिचां नावमातस्थिवांसं ॥

“When I (a descendant of the family of Vasishttha) and Varuna were proceeding in the mid-sea on a vessel, it was so dancing, tossed to and fro by the waves, as if we were enjoying in a rocking cradle.

“As a dying man relinquishes his wealth and fortune, so *Turga* sent his son Bhujyu to the sea. O Aswis ! You have brought him back by your own ship, since that ship was floating in the sea, as water does not enter it.

“O Nasatyas ! (नामकु) you took Bhujyu by a hundred, wheeléd car dragged by six horses. The car was carried, in course of three days and three nights, to the coast of the sea.

“O Aswis ! You did this work in the sea, which has no support, which has no land within it, and where nothing, not even a stick, can be found. You brought back Bhujya to his own house by a boat having a hundred rowers.”

The above *śloka*s clearly and distinctly prove that sea-voyage was prevalent in the Vedic ages. The last *śloka* pointedly tells us that the Hindoos used to undertake voyages of very long distance. It also shows that the term *Samudra* cannot be applied to any inland waters, since it says there is no land within it. There cannot be a clearer and stronger proof than this. In the face of this, one cannot maintain that sea-voyage is opposed to the injunctions of the Hindu *śāstras*. There are also texts in the three other Vedas which go to establish our position. Although some seemingly condemnatory passages may be found in the later or comparatively more modern writings of the Hindoos, bearing on the subject of sea-voyage, yet they carry little or no weight with them, as they are opposed to the texts quoted above from the Vedas. It is well known that where “Vedas” and the Smritis differ, preference should be given to the former, and where the Smritis and the Purans differ, preference should be given to the Smriti.

The question of sea-voyage was not lost sight of in the Institutes of Menu. Sloka 157, chapter VIII, says—

समुद्रयानकुशला देशकालार्थदर्शिनः ।

स्थापयन्ति तु यां वृद्धिं सा तत्राधिगमं प्रति ॥

“Interest on money lent on list is said to be fixed by men well acquainted with *sea-voyages* or journeys by land.”

It is evident to every unprejudiced mind, from the *śloka* cited above, that sea-voyage was sanctioned by Menu, the greatest law-giver of the Hindoos.

In the *śloka*s from 151-166, in chapter III, Menu says that physicians, astrologers, and priests having a large number of disciples, those who dispute with their fathers ; those who live upon idol-worship ; those who are conceited panegyrists ; those who teach Sudras ; those who drink spirituous liquors ; those who injure their friends, are not to be fed on the occasion of the *śhrādhā* ceremony, i. e., are not to receive *वेदन* or an invitation to receive the articles of the *śhrādhā*, and the list also includes those who undertake sea-voyage.—*vide śloka* 158, chapter III—

आगारदाही गरदः कुण्डाशी सोमविक्रयी ।

समुद्रयायी वन्दीच तैलिकः कुटकारकः ॥

"One who burns houses, a poisoner, one who eats with the son of an adulteress, one who sells the soma plant, one who goes on sea-voyages, and a panegyrist, an oil-monger, and a suborner of perjury."

It may be urged by the oppositon party that Menu in the above *shloka* does not approve of sea-voyage, but it is evident that it cannot at all be considered in the light of a restriction, as the other crimes, if any, also alluded to, are not only now rampant throughout the whole structure of Hindoo society, but even go unchallenged by the votaries of orthodox Hindooism. Besides, the passage applies exclusively to Brahmins, and it should also be borne in mind that there is not a single passage in the whole Institutes of Menu which says that to a Hindoo sea-voyage is a sin or even an offence. As the disapproval if any extends to a multitude of other things, which are so common in modern Hindoo society, it carries no weight with it all. Why then raise such unreasonable objection against sea-voyage, which is not only approved of, but also sanctioned, by the Hindoo *shastras*?

We learn from the *Ramayana* that "merchants trafficked beyond the sea, and were in the habit of bringing presents to the King."

Mention is made of यवद्वीप, or Java, in this epic (*Kiskindhya Kanda*, Sarya 40)—

यत्नवन्तो यवद्वीपं सप्तराज्योपशोभितं ।

सुवर्णं रूप्यकं द्वीपं सुवर्णकाय मण्डितं ॥

It appears from the following *shloka* in the *Mahabharata* that Sahadeva, the youngest brother of the five Pandavas, went to the several islands in the sea, and conquered the *Melucha* inhabitants thereof—

सागर द्वीपवासांश्च नृपतीन् स्तेच्छयोनिजान् ।

निषादान् पुरुषादांश्च कर्णप्रावरनानपि

द्वीपं ताम्राह्वयञ्चैव सनृपं वशेकृत्वा सहामतिः ।

The magnanimous Sahadeva conquered and brought under his subjection the *Melucha* kings, and hunters, and cannibals inhabiting the several islands in the sea, including the island called Tamra, &c.

From the *Mitaskhara* we learn that the Hindoos were in the habit of making adventurous sea-voyages.

Mention is also made of sea-voyage in the *Vayu Purana*, *Haribangsa*, *Markendeya Purana*, *Bhagabat Purana*, *Uitopodesa*, *Sakuntala*, *Rathnavali*,

Dasa Kumarchorita, Kathasaritsagar, and in several other books of the Hindoos.

In the Kathasaritsagar (which is compiled by Somadeva from a higher and superior work which is a translation of a work in the Paisachio language, a form of Prakrita whose date is not later than the 5th Century A. D.), we meet with innumerable references to sea-voyages.

In the 25th Taranga, slokas 58—60, and in the 26th Taranga, slokas 124—150, we find mention of sea-voyage.

In the 50th Taranga, it is said the Chitrakara, with two mendicants, reached the city of Pratisthan अतिष्ठान after crossing the vast ocean. Then he reached Muktipura मुक्तिपुर island in eight days, after defeating his enemies.

Strabo says that the Indians navigated the Ganges from the sea up to Palibothra. We learn from Macpherson's annals of commerce that "the Natives of India extended their voyages beyond the former limits, and took an active share in the trade with Egypt."

In the 6th Century, according to Plinny, the merchants of India called in at the ports of Persia by sea.

We learn from Dr. Wilson's account of the travels of the great Chinese traveller Fa Hiam, in the journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Vol. V that he was on board an Indian ship, which was entirely manned and officered by Hindoos, and that there were also Brahmin passengers in that ship.

We quote the following from Bakara Purana in confirmation of our views :—

पुनस्तत्रैव गमने वणिग्भावे मतिर्गता ।
 समुद्रयाने रत्नानि महास्थौल्यानि साधुभिः ।
 रत्नपारीक्षकैः सार्धमानायिष्ये बह्वनिच ।
 एवं निश्चित्य मनसा महासार्धं पुरःसरः
 समुद्रयायिभिलोकैः संविदं सूच्य निर्गतः ॥
 शुकेन सह संप्राप्तो महान्तं लवणार्णवं ।
 पीतारूढास्ततः सर्वे पीतवाहै रूपोषिताः

"He felt inclined to proceed to that place as a merchant, and to accompany those who know all about precious gems, on a sea-going vessel,

in view to bring good many large pearls of great price. With this resolve he went on his journey with several other merchants, aided by people well acquainted with sea-voyages."

In Raj-Tarangini, the only historical work now extant in Sanskrit, we meet with the following sloka :—

सान्धिविग्रहिकः सीड्य गाच्छन पीतच्युतोऽम्बुधौ ।
प्रापपारं तिमिग्रासात्तिमिसुत्पाद्य निर्गतः ॥

"The royal messenger fell into the sea while proceeding on a vessel, and a whale devoured him; but ripping open its belly, he came out and crossed the sea."

From what we have said above, it will appear to every unprejudiced mind that sea-voyage was prevalent in India from the very earliest time.

The only two passages which can be cited by the opponents of sea voyage in their favour are altogether vague, and not exactly to the point. They were probably composed at a later period, when Hindooism was rather on the decline, and the adventurous, bold and enterprising spirit of the Hindoos was dying out, and with a view, perhaps, to counteract the increasing and proselytising influence of the Mahomedans, which was probably then in the ascendant, especially in Bengal.

The following text in Brihat Naradiya Purana says :—

“समुद्रयात्रा स्त्रीकारः कमण्डलु विधारणं
द्विजानामसवर्णासु कन्यासूपयमस्तथा
देवरेण सुतोत्पत्ति मधुपर्के प्रशोर्वधः
मांसदानं तथा आद्वे वाणप्रस्थाश्रमस्तथा
दत्तायाश्चैप कन्यायाः पुनर्दानं वरस्य च
दीर्घकालं ब्रह्मचर्यं नरमेधाश्वमेधकौ
महाप्रस्थानगमनं गोमेधश्च तथासखः
इमान् धर्मान् कलिद्युगे वर्ज्याना हुर्मनीषिणः ॥”

“Sea-voyage, carrying of the bowl or the begging pot (kamandalu) marriage with girls of other than one's own caste by the twice-born classes, production of issue by a brother-in-law, husband's younger brother (दत्तवत्), immolation of animals at the Madhuparka, offering of flesh-meat at

shraddhas, entrance into the Vanaprastha state, gift of a daughter once already given away (widow marriage), protracted Brahmacharya, human sacrifice, horse sacrifice, expiatory suicide by falling from very high mountains, gomedha sacrifice, and vedic yajnas involving sacrifices of cattle ; these dharmas ought to be avoided in the Kali Yuga”.

The passage in the Brihat Naradyia can also be interpreted in a different manner Kasiram Bhattacharya, the learned and able commentator of Raghunandan, says with regard to this passage that going to the sea for the purpose of committing suicide by drowning one's self therein prohibited in the text of Brihat Naradyia in the Kali Yuga.

The learned commentator says—

अत्र समुद्रयात्रास्वीकारशब्देन, मरणमुद्दिश्य समुद्रयात्रा-
स्वीकारः महाप्रस्थानगमनञ्च मरणमुद्दिश्य हिमालयादिगमनं
इत्येवञ्चापि सुधीभिर्विभाव्य ।

“That the term मरणमुद्दिश्य स्वीकार means proceeding to sea for the purpose of committing suicide by drowning.”

It thus appears from the explanation given by the learned commentator that sea-voyage is prohibited in the Kali Yuga only in the case of those who undertake it with the object of committing suicide by drowning.* This restriction cannot therefore apply to those who proceed on sea-voyage for the purpose of acquiring wealth, knowledge, or for pleasure and the like. As it is evident from the *shloka* quoted in the Brihat Naradyia Purana that all the interdictions enumerated are exclusively of a religious character, the particular interdiction as regards sea-voyage cannot but be of the same nature, i. e., sea-voyage with a religious motive is prohibited in the Kali Yuga. The opponents of sea-voyage may cite this *shloka*, and try to prove that sea-voyage is opposed thereto by imposing upon the public, who know little or nothing of Sanskrit, and by perverting or misinterpreting the *shloka* itself. But those who understand Sanskrit will at once see that our pleading is not special, and that the interpretation given by the learned commentator is perfectly accurate. It is apparently from the text that ईमान् धर्मान् these *dharmas* are prohibited in the Kali Yuga. Sea-voyage in itself is no *dharma*. It is considered *dharma* by Parasara, when one undertakes sea-voyage for the purpose of

* The great oriental scholar and critic, Dr. Rajendralala Mitra, translates मरणमुद्दिश्य स्वीकार as “suicide by getting one's self drowned in the sea.”

expiating his sin, caused by the murder of a Brahmin. We cite the text of Parasara below :—

शतयोजनविस्तीर्णं शतयोजनस्यितं ।

रामचन्द्रसमादिष्टनलसञ्चयसञ्चितं ।

सेतुं दृष्ट्वा समुद्रस्य ब्रह्महत्यां व्यपोहति ॥

“The sight of the bridge over the sea, extending over 800 miles, constructed under instructions from the great Ramachandra by Nala and others, is efficacious for the expiation of the sin of Brahmin murder.”

The learned lexicographer, the late Tarn Nath Īrāṅkāśpati, who is justly considered as an authority in Sanskrit literature in modern times, also holds the same view. He says—

“समुद्रयात्रास्वीकारः इत्यादौ तु, धर्मरूपसमुद्रयात्रा-
स्वीकारस्यैव कलौ निषेधात् बाणिज्यराजाज्ञादिनिमित्तकस्य
तस्य निषेधाभावेन तद्विषयकत्वासम्भवात् ।”

By the phrase *sumudra jatra sika*, sea-voyage for religious purposes is prohibited in the Kali Yuga, and in the absence of prohibition to sea-voyage for merchandise or that undertaken under the mandate of the sovereign it cannot possibly be made applicable to such sea-voyages.

The other text under which shelter is taken by the oppositionists is from the Aditya Purana, which runs thus :—

विधवायां प्रजोत्पत्तौ देवस्य नियोजनं ।

द्विजस्याब्धौ तु नैयातुः शोधितस्यापि संग्रहः ।

प्रतिमाभ्यर्चनार्थाय सङ्कल्पस्य सधर्मकः ।

एतानि लोकगुप्तार्थं कलेरादौ महात्मभिः ।

निवर्त्तितानि विद्वद्भिर्व्यवस्थापूर्वकं बुधैः ॥

“The production of issue by a widow or by a Devara (the youngest brother of the husband); the taking back into the social circle a twice-born man who went on sea-voyage, though he had performed *praischitwa* or expiation; those who live on idol-worship; those who perform religious observances with an aim or *गुरु* these *dharma*s and the like have been abstained from by noble and learned men at the beginning of the Kali Yuga for the well being of mankind.”

Tara Nath Tarakbachaspati interprets the sloka in the following manner :—

ततश्च धर्मार्थसमुद्रयानगमनमेव कलौ निषिद्धमित्प्रायातं
तद्गमनकाले च यदा स्नेच्छादिभिर्गुरुतरसंसर्गः सन्ध्यादित्प्रागश्च
तदैव प्रायश्चित्ताचरणेऽपि द्विजानामवहार्यता, शूद्राणां तु न
कश्चिद्दोषः । समुद्रगमनमात्रे च कुतःपि शास्त्रे प्रायश्चित्ताद्य-
दर्शनात् न तस्य निषिद्धता इदानीन्तुनां विगानन्तु स्नेच्छ-
भूरिसंसर्गशङ्कयैवेति एतन्मूलकमेव इदानीमपि अन्यैर्दाक्षिणीतः
शिष्टैर्वाचिज्याद्यर्थं सिंहलादिगमनमनुष्ठीयते । अतः समुद्रयान-
गमनमात्रं निषिद्धमिति तु रिक्तं वचः ।

Sea-voyage or proceeding on a sea-going vessel for religious purposes, only is interdicted. If during such voyage one comes in special contact with the Melachas, and if on such occasions one abandons Sandhya or authorised daily prayers at stated hours, and the like, then in that case if the twice-born who has committed such fault performs *praischitwa*, then he is not to be taken back within the pale of Hindoo society. As for the Sudras, no fault attaches to them under such a contingency. As no *praischitwa* is laid down anywhere in the Hindoo *shastras* in connection with sea-voyage, it is established that it is not inhabited. Even at the present day people proceed to Ceylon and other places through the sea on mercantile enterprise. It is, therefore, idle to say that sea-voyage in general is prohibited.

This *sloka*, also, as it will be apparent from the above interpretation, does not prohibit sea-voyage for secular purposes in the Kali Yuga. It only speaks of *praischitwa* or expiation on the part of those who have ceased performing their most important daily religious duties as Hindoos, and grown to lax and intimate with the Melachas in the matter of food. Moreover, this text has exclusive application to the Brahmins. All the Hindoo *sastrakars* most distinctly say that there is no prohibition whatever for the Sudras at any time and under any circumstances to make voyages by sea. If in spite of all this the opponents of sea-voyage do not accept the interpretations of Kasiram and Taranath, and try to impose on the general public unacquainted with Sanskrit, tenaciously sticking to their own forced interpretation, we could only say that, failing to find any prohibitory passage either in the Vedas, or in the Smritis,

or in the primary Purans, they were compelled to resort to two isolated passages in the two Upapurans, or Purans, of secondary importance, mentioned above, which are beyond all doubt, less authoritative, less important, and less binding upon the Hindoos than the injunctions contained in the Vedas, the Smritis, and the Purans. As to the order of precedence, of our respective *shastras* the Prayoga Panchajanya says—

श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणां विरोधो यत्र विद्यते ।
तत्र श्रुतं प्रमाणं तयोर्द्वये स्मृतिर्वरा ॥
वेदार्थोपनिबन्धत्वात् प्राधान्यं हि मनोऽस्मृतं ।
मन्वर्थविपरीता यः सा स्मृतिरपधास्यते ॥

It is passing strange that casting aside the authority of the Vedas, the Smritis, and the Purans, they take their stand upon two isolated passages of the two Upapurans. According to Horace Hayman Wilson, the Upapurans are not older than the 12th century A. D., and the late Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra, LL. D., C. I. E., whose profound erudition, deep learning, and ripe scholarship are universally acknowledged, and whose recent lamentable death has caused a vacuum in the world of oriental literature, says, "these Upapurans have been so carelessly preserved, and are so full of interpolations, and altogether are of such questionable authenticity, that even the most orthodox Hindoo holds them to be of very secondary rank compared to the Vedas, the Smritis, and the Sutras."

But before finally taking leave of the two texts, I would most prominently bring to your notice that notwithstanding the qualified interdiction to sea-voyage contained therein, the above texts are immediately followed by the following passages in the same two Upapurans, respectively, which make our position still more firm :—

देशाचाराः परिग्राह्याः तत्तद्देशीयजैर्नरैः ।
अन्यथा पतितो ज्ञेयः सर्वधर्मवहिष्कृतः ॥

"One should observe the manners and customs of his own country; one who does not do this becomes degraded and fallen (*patita*) and devoid of all *dharma*."

समयज्ञापि साधूनां प्रमाणं वेदवद्भवेत्

"The practice of revered persons is proof as potent as that of the Vedas."

As we have shown above that 'sea-voyage' was prevalent in ancient Hindoo society from the earliest times, and that the practice was generally followed both by Aryan potentates and Rishis, the passages conditionally prohibiting sea-voyage do not carry any weight with them.

The view we have taken as regards the texts in our disfavour from Brihat Naradyia Puran and Amitya Purana, also corroborated by no less an authority in the Sanskrit literature than Pandit Satybrata Samasnamī? He says—

“একপ বচনাবলীর মান্য রক্ষা করিতে হইলে অগ্নিহোত্র ও সন্ন্যাস গ্রহণও কলিকালে নিষিদ্ধ হইয়া পড়ে পৰন্তু তদুভয় অদ্যাপি সুপ্রচলিত থাকায় ঐ শ্রেণীর বচনগুলি অস্মৎ সমাজে চিরদিনই জিনাদৃত হইয়া আসিতেছে, তৎসম্বন্ধে সংশয় থাকিতেছে না, বরং সন্ন্যাস-ধর্মের সুপ্রচলনকারী ভগবান্ শঙ্করাচার্যের সময় পর্য্যন্তও ইহা তাদৃশ বচনাবলির আবির্ভাবই হয় নাই একপ অনুমানও নিতান্ত অসঙ্গত না হইতে পারে। এতাবত বোধ হয় ইহা ধীমত্বমাত্রই স্বীকার করিবেন যে ঐদৃশ আধুনিক দুইটীমাত্র উপপুরাণের উপকথার উপরি নির্ভর করিয়া সমুদ্র উন্নতির উপায়স্বরূপ চিরপ্রচলিত সমুদ্রযাত্রা কদাপি নিষিদ্ধ হইতে পারে না।

The late venerable Pundit Iswara Chundra Vidyasagara, whose lamentable death is justly considered as a great national calamity, and whose authority in Sanskrit literature cannot be questioned by any, says in his treatise on widow marriage—

এইরূপে স্পষ্ট দৃষ্ট হইতেছে, যে কলিযুগে অশ্বমেধ, মহাপ্রস্থান গমন, যতিধর্ম সমুদ্রযাত্রা, দীর্ঘকাল ব্রহ্মচর্য, এই কয় ধর্মের অনুষ্ঠান হইয়া আসিতেছে।

There are several other passages in the Hindoo *shastras* in support of the view we have taken in the matter of sea-voyage, but as I have already trospased upon your time and patience so long, and as the question will doubtless be grasped and grappled with in all its bearings by some of our ablest men, who have condescended to address this meeting, it is superfluous on my part to make any further quotations from the *shastras*. Now it must be quite clear to every unprejudiced thinker from the proofs adduced above that the Hindoos navigated the seas often. Nowhere throughout the vast range of our *shastras*, whether in the Vedas, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Sanhitas, Purans or in the general literature of the country, sea-voyage is prohibited or regarded as a sin, or an offence, or a crime. On the other hand, it was a prevailing custom of the Hindoos in all ages. It did not fall into disuse at any stage of Hindoo society. The voyages of Srimanta Saudagar and Yougandharayan are well known to every Hindoo. Even at the present day there is a custom prevalent amongst the Hindoos of Southern India to gather pearls from the sea round about the island of Ceylon and other adjacent parts. It is not an

uncommon fact that pilgrims proceed to Pooree to visit the great shrine of Juggernath on board the steamer sailing through the Bay of Bengal. No one now objects to any one going to Rangoon, Madras, or Ceylon by ship. If in the face of such facts you stand up and say that sea-voyage is disallowable to a Hindoo, as it is not sanctioned in our *shastras*, then we can only say that all that we can do is to give you reasons and arguments, and that if you are determined not to be convinced, we regret to say that it is useless to discuss the question.

If going to a *Melachadesa* or making sea-voyage is not considered as a sin according to our *shastras*, then we don't see any reason whatever for expiation or *प्रायश्चित्त*.

Where there is no sin there can be no punishment or expiation. Moreover, in Raghunandan's *Prayaschitwa Bivaka* no mention of *Prayaschitwa* is made for going to a *Melachadesa* or making sea-voyage. So those who say that our England-retained countrymen should make expiation for their proceeding to England do not only evince lamentable ignorance of the Hindoo *shastras*, but exhibit a want of fairness, endurance, and common sense. It is highly illiberal, ungenerous, and despotic to place our England returned brethren in a position of abject humiliation by compelling them, at the sacrifice of their conscience, the voice of God in the human heart, to partake of cow dung, as if they have committed the most heinous and horrible crimes in the annals of human iniquities, although the *shastras* nowhere maintain that sea-voyage is an act of sin.

The next and the last point to which I wish to invite your attention is the partaking of forbidden food by those who go to England, and on which so much stress is laid at present by our countrymen.

Menu says—

स्वाविधं शल्यकं गोधां खल्विक्कूर्मशशांस्तथा ।

भक्ष्यान् पञ्चनखेष्वहुरनुष्टांश्चैकतोदतः ॥

"The wise have pronounced eatable, among five-toed animals, the hedgehog or boar and porcupine, the iguanas, rhinoceros, tortoise, and hare also, and except camels, animals which have one row of teeth."

Again—

प्रोक्षितं भक्षयेन्मांसं ब्राह्मणानाञ्च काम्यया ।

यथाविधि नियुक्तसु प्राणानामेव चात्यये ॥

So those who are obliged to resort to forbidden food from sheer necessity, such as the preservation of life, cannot reasonably be outcasted.

If the scheme ~~going~~ to England receives due consideration in the hands of the Hindoo public, ~~there~~ will then probably be no necessity for the partaking of forbidden ~~meat~~, for in that case it may be expected that Hindoo hotels might be established in England. We, for our part, most sincerely wish that arrangements should be made for Hindoo gentlemen to proceed to England in a Hindoo way and according to Hindoo principles. Let me not be misunderstood. I did not stand up before you this evening as the advocate of meat-eating. ~~On the other hand, it is better~~ if any one can do without it. Although there is ~~no~~ positive sin in partaking of animal food, yet every one ought to have a strong dislike for it for humanity and kindness to animals, as Menu says—

नृणां सत्त्वे दधि न मत्स्यं न च मैथुने ।

प्रवृत्तिरेषा भूतानां निवृत्तिस्तु महाफला ॥

“There is no fault in eating flesh, nor in drinking intoxicating liquor, nor in ~~any~~ ^{any} ~~occupation~~, for that is the occupation of beings, but cessation from them produces great fruit.”

We have adduced texts in favour of meat-eating only for the purpose of showing that meat was not only unknown in ancient India, but formed chief article of food not only amongst the lower classes, but also amongst the most ~~civilized~~ ^{refined}, refined, and pious Brahmins and Kshatriyas.

It should not be forgotten that, although we are pre-eminently a conservative people, the whole organisation of the Hindoo Society has undergone, and is daily undergoing, since the vedic ages, thorough changes in the matter of diet, costume, and the mode of living under the pressure of past and existing circumstances. It is absurd to suppose that Hindoo manners and customs have remained unchanged and unchanging at the present moment, amid the changes of a changeable age.

We have shown that according to our *shastras* a man's diet was regulated in conformity to the custom of the country in which he might be living at the time. Food defiled by the contact of or with the touch of the Melachas can be taken freely by the Hindoos when they cannot do without it. We quote the following from Menu on this point :—

जीवितात्ययमापन्नो योऽन्नमंति यतस्ततः ।

आकाशमिव पङ्केन न स पापेन लिप्यते ॥

“If one eats food procured from any source whatever, when he has reached the point where life is passing away, as the air is not filled by dirt, so he is not besmeared by this sin.”

This *sloka* distinctly lays down that a man ~~can~~ partake of any kind of food at any body's hands when there ~~is~~ ^{is} a sheer necessity for it.

अजीर्तः सुतं हन्तुमुपासीत भुञ्जितः ।
 न चालिष्यते प्रापेत् क्षुत्प्रतीहारमाचरन् ॥
 श्वमांसमिच्छन्ति धर्माधर्मविचक्षणः ।
 प्राणानां परं पृथं वामदेवो न लिप्तवान् ॥
 भरद्वाजः क्षुधार्तस्तु पुत्रो विजने वने
 वृद्धीर्गाः प्रतिजग्राह नृपाणां महाश्रमः
 क्षुधार्तश्चात्तुमभ्यागादिश्वामित्रः श्वजाघनीम् ।
 चण्डालहस्तादादाय धर्माधर्मविचक्षणः ॥

"Ajigarta, when desiring to eat, undertook to ~~kill~~ his son, and was not on that account besmeared with sin, because practising this as an antidote to hunger."

"Nor was Vamadava besmeared with sin who, ~~being~~ well-knowing right and wrong, wanted to eat dog's flesh in order to ~~prevent~~ animation, because oppressed with hunger."

"Moreover, Bharadvaja, whose devotion was great, being oppressed by hunger in a lonely world with his son, received many cows from Vidhu, the carpenter."

"Moreover, Visvamitra, well knowing right and wrong, being oppressed by hunger, proceeded to eat the rump of a dog, having received it from the hand of a Chandala."

It will thus be seen that the Hindoo religion, in spite of its exclusive and sectarian character, abounds with large and liberalised views.

As we have now understood the importance of sea-voyages and that travelling to England, America, and other trans-oceanic countries is a matter of necessity in the best secular interests of the country, the establishment of Hindoo hotels in those countries is a consummation most devoutly to be wished for. It will indeed be a source of gratification to us all if this long-felt want is met in this manner. There are many of our countrymen who object to sea-voyage on the score of forbidden food alone. If Hindoo hotels are opened in England, and if the voyage could be undertaken in Hindoo way and with the observance of the injunction

of the Hindoos *shas* as regards food and drink, then I believe there can be no reasonable objection whatever.

The subject is of such magnitude that it has been impossible for me to touch all the points in the course of a single lecture. It would have been better if the task had devolved upon some better and abler hands, and I regret that, in my humble opinion, I have failed to place this question before you in such a light and manner as I so much wished to do.

One word more, and I have done. I hope that this question of seamyage amongst us will be taken up and decided by the general Hindoo public with fairness and in a large, liberal, and generous spirit. As man is emphatically the creature of circumstances, it behoves us all to accommodate ourselves as far as possible to the altered and new condition of things into which the country is now fast drifting,—consistently and with the profoundest veneration for our ancient usages and customs, so long as such action does not directly interfere or clash with the fundamental principles of our religion. There is nothing to prevent our going a little out of the ordinary track to inaugurate a social reform, if such be not in direct opposition to the spirit and explicit ruling of our *shastras*. The following extract from a lecture on "caste" delivered in Calcutta, in July 1870, by my revered father, Baboo Harish Chandra Mitra, will show that introduction of change in Hindoo society is sanctioned by the Hindoo *shastras*, when such may be required for the good of the people under altered circumstances of the country:—

"It might sound paradoxical, but it is nevertheless true, that the conservatism of the Hindoo mind is not quite supported by the Hindoo *shastras*. On the contrary, they seem to go somewhat against it. According to Yama Sanhita, Dharma (virtue) is not a fixed but variable quantity. It is made dependent on the decision of one, two or three learned Hindoo divines, who are fully authorised in all ages to alter existing institutions, should such a course appear to them expedient and imperative."

एको द्वौ वा त्रयो वापियद्
ब्रुधर्मापाठकाः स धर्म इति विज्ञेय ।

"In conformity to this ruling, there can be no religious hindrance in a strictly Hindoo point of view towards a revision in some points, should the present altered circumstances of the country and the people demand such a measure."

As the Congress movement, which is looking upon an upheaval of the national mind, distinctly shows that our countrymen are trying hard for their political rights and privileges and that they love liberty, it behoves them, with a view to reasonable consistency, to give certain amount of liberty to the nation in the matter of such social advancement as will prove conducive to the best interests of the country, consistent with our *shastras* and customs. Mazzini the duties of man says:— "Liberty is sacred, as the individual, of whose life it is the reflex, is sacred. Where liberty is not, life is reduced to a mere organic function, and where man suffers the violation of his liberty, it is false to his own nature, and rebels against the decree of God."

In conclusion, I fervently hope that our countrymen, without proving false to the national religion, will unite in a body and man to do everything in their power to promote the best interests of the country, and that on the other hand, our England-retained brethren will use their best endeavours, not in any way to offend the feelings of the orthodox portion by their manners, costume, and general mode of living. Under such a state of things, I fully trust that in the Benign dispensations of God's Providence, and under the fostering care of England, India, distinguished as she is for the vastness of her rivers, the gorgeousness of her mountains and the exuberance of her vegetation, will at no distant date be alike distinguished for political advancement, intellectual growth, and moral we then